

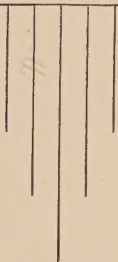
To Mother,
for Mothers' Day May 10, '25

George.



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BY THE SAME AUTHOR
THE HARPS OF GOD
AND THE
CHORDS THEY PLAY



Mary the Mother and All Mothers

IN HOLY LANDS AND ALL LANDS
ON HOLY DAYS AND ALL DAYS

By
George MacAdam



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DEDICATED
TO
A D A
THE
“LITTLE MOTHER”



MADONNA AND CHILD
Barabino

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ANNUNCIATION

Hofmann

THE ANNUNCIATION

And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.

.

And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God.

And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.

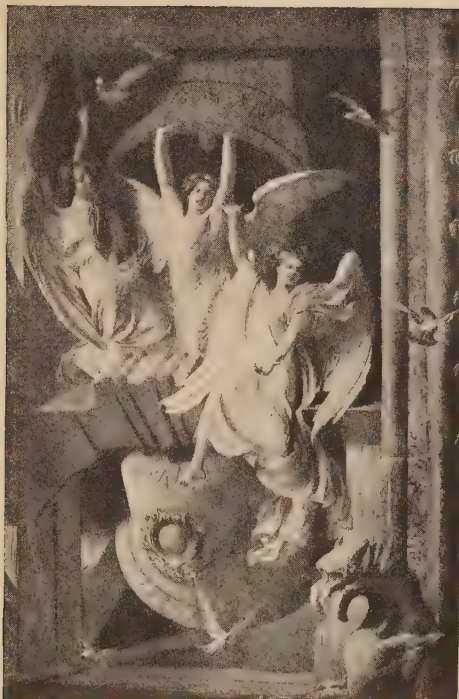
For with God nothing shall be impossible.

And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.

And the Angel departed from her.

(Luke 1. 28, 30-38.)

PART ONE



Edwin H. Blashfield

CHRISTMAS CHIMES

THE ANGELIC CHOIR

That song is sung by rich and poor,
Where'er the Christ is known;
'Tis sung in words, and sung in deeds,
Which bind all hearts in one.
Angels are still the choristers,
But we the shepherds are,
To bear the message which they bring
To those both near and far:
"Glory to God in the highest,"
The angels' song resounds,
"Glory to God in the highest!"

—C. Whitney Coombs.

CHAPTER I

THE ORIGINAL CHRISTMAS CAROLS

IT is not strange that the good will with which the advent of Jesus came, and which is increasingly flooding the earth since his coming, should have originally broken out in song. Frances Osgood fancied that when the Creator began to arrange original matter from chaos into order he invoked the power of music as one of his agents:

"The Father spake, and in grand reverberations
Through space rolled on the mighty music-tide,
While to its low, majestic modulations,
The clouds of chaos slowly swept aside.
And wheresoe'er in his rich creation
Sweet music breathes in wave or bird or soul,
'Tis but the faint and far reverberation,
Of the great tune to which the planets roll."

So it seems fitting that when the Creator would continue his great program of bringing harmony into his universe—spiritual as well as material; to the human world as well as to the physical earth—he would set it to music and look about him for singers. It

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should be borne in mind that his world is crammed full of music. We have all of us practically felt what Madison Cawein has so poetically expressed :

“All things are wrought of melody,
Unheard yet full of speaking spells;
Within the rock, within the tree,
A soul of music dwells.

“A mute symphonic sense that thrills
The silent frame of mortal things;
Its heart in the ancient hills
And in each flower sings.

“To harmony all growth is set;
Each seed is but a music-note,
From which each plant, each violet,
Evolves its purple note.”

There are harmonies in the world all about us, slumbering in the meanest and commonest things, ready to break out at the slightest touch into notes of bewitching beauty or bursts of oratorio.

We do not know who invented music—Hermes, Orpheus, Terpander, or whether it was Jubal, “the father of all such as handle the harp and organ.” But whoever it was, his task was only to arrange into order and system the sounds and music already existent in nature—the sighing of the leaves, the whis-

THE ORIGINAL CHRISTMAS CAROLS

per of the breeze, the monotone of the bees, as well as the mighty diapason of the forest and the subbasses of the surf as it pounds out its thunderous tones on the shore.

There is an old legend that in the beginning the Esthonian god of music came to the earth and gathered together in the sacred wood all the newly created creatures to give them their first music lesson. He played and sang, while the trees learned to rustle their leaves in unison; the brooks tuned the murmur of their waters in harmony; the winds studied the art of sighing and whistling in perfect accord; the birds and beasts practiced their parts in the tremendous chorus of Nature, while man studied them all and learned to use each in its place in the mightier chorus of praise he was forming. It would seem that Isaac Watts had this in mind when he wrote this stanza of one of his hymns:

“Joy to the world! the Saviour reigns;
Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains,
Repeat the sounding joy.”

It is astonishing to find the bases of “the divine art” in such lowly things. This is expressed in “The Hymn to Hermes”—once attributed to Homer—where the god made his

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noted Apollo-lyre out of nothing loftier than a disemboweled tortoise shell which he strung with seven strings of sheep sinew.

So, wood from the forest long since dead; ivory from tusks that were buried in the ice-age; metals, for pipes and strings, that slumbered for countless eons in deeply sunken ore bed—all these respond to the mind and will of the artist and break forth into the sweetest of harmonies. And if God could make such common things to sing for man, surely he could find somewhere among the devout, forward-looking men and women who had been trained by centuries of heredity to delight in the rich and ornate worship of the Hebrew, souls so attuned to heavenly harmonies that they would sing for him.

Remember that they were descendants of a race which took their music with them when they were carried to Babylon as captives, though they hung their harps on the willows crying, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" But they never forgot the song. Their ancestry included David, Asaph, Solomon, Heman and Jeduthun, who had through the centuries taught and led their people in "the songs of Zion." One of their twelve tribes had been set apart for musicians and from this group David appointed at one

THE ORIGINAL CHRISTMAS CAROLS

time "four thousand Levites to praise the Lord with instruments," and hundreds upon hundreds "who were cunning in song."

The Hebrews were proficient in vocal art, and some of their soloists—Miriam, Deborah, Judith, and the daughters of Heman—the world shall never forget. Surely, among these people God would not look in vain for singers! And he found them: people who were on tip-toe, listening for messages of glad tidings that would make them sing; whose souls had been steeped in "the Promises of Hope" and whose eyes through long gazing had become acute to discern the coming of a Redeemer; Eastern souls with whom poetry and music was a sort of native language and whose ordinary speech was ornate with figure and picture, and as naturally a-bloom with the flowers of rhetoric as their hills were with flaming anemones and roses of Sharon.

Through all human history, since One had been promised as the seed of woman to bruise the serpent's head, the music of his coming had seeped out over the earth, here and there, in this century and that, and from various races—strange little rifts of exaltation, exquisite little melodies of hope, outbursts of expectation, of what, the watchers scarcely knew, only that it set them singing. On his dying

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bed Jacob has a vision that puts a strain of music into his last will and testament: "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." Job would not be repressed, but lifted up his voice and sang, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." As David, the sweet singer ministered in the temple, with a strange uplift of emotion he sensed that which made him shout, "His name shall endure forever; his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed. . . . Blessed be his glorious name forever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen." What a rapt figure Isaiah is as he stands peering out from under his prophet's cowl looking at that which fills him with a tumult of joy! And his joy is that he may be "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.'"

And so, increasingly, as they move down the centuries this people are led into a great expectancy that erupts into singing—Jeremiah, Daniel, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi. Then, "in due time," the vestibule of the gospel opened, and it would have been indeed strange

THE ORIGINAL CHRISTMAS CAROLS

if the Subject of so much song should have had no singers to greet him.

The Rev. Henry Burton says: "When the ark of God was brought up from Baale Judah it was encircled with one wide wreath of music, a traveling orchestra of harps and psalteries, castanets and cymbals; and, as now that ark of all the promises is borne across from the old to the new dispensation, as the promise becomes a fulfillment and the hope a realization, shall there not be the voice of song and gladness? Our sense of the fitness of things expects it; Heaven's law of the harmonies demands it; and had there not been this burst of praise and song, we should have listened for the very stones to cry out, rebuking the strange silence."¹

So, not unnaturally nor miraculously, but in accord with a divine plan, harmonious beyond the appreciation of our uncultivated, jazz-debauched and material tastes, He who gives the lark its morning song flanked the entrance of "the dayspring from on high who hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness" with his Carolists. Does it seem strange to you that four very common, prosaic

¹Reprinted from *The Expositor's Bible*, "St. Luke," by the permission of the publishers, George H. Doran Company.

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people should suddenly break out into impromptu songs of the highest poetic quality? That they should each sing an exquisite carol and then quietly return to comparative obscurity? Does it seem to you so incredible that it vitiates the account of the whole wonderful event and troubles your faith? But why should it? Does not the record justify itself and explain any kind of inexplicable thing when it states that they were under the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit? Read the account in Luke: "Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost"; Simeon . . . "came by the Spirit into the temple"; Zacharias was "filled with the Holy Ghost"; and Mary, fresh from the angel-presence, could not be expected to still the glad anthem that sang in her soul; it would have been indeed a miracle if she or they could have remained silent.

The acceptance of these four singers with their carols is not with us an article of our faith in Christ as the world's Saviour. If we cannot hear their singing, we need not miss the song from His life. But how fine it is to give ourselves up to the enjoyment of the whole service!—the proceSSIONAL—in which were figures from the Egyptian, Assyrian, as well as the Hebrew world—that began so far down the centuries that we can scarcely hear it; the

THE ORIGINAL CHRISTMAS CAROLS

constantly augmenting choir that assembles down the years into an ever-swelling chorus; the prelude of carols with which the new era opens and that blends into the new song of the Gospel that is now being sung by a multitude which dwarfs the choir that the Seer of Patmos heard singing the "new song."

Surely, if God could put the possibility of music into the commonest things so that they make harmonious response to the thought and will of man, He, the great Spirit of Music, could touch the souls of these men and women whose ancestors for a thousand years had chanted the psalms of David, with the tonic power to sing his songs for him. If the organist translates the breeze through common pipes into such wonderful harmony, surely He could open up the stops in even dumb lives and awaken mute lips like Simeon's until they would respond to his touch upon the keyboards of their emotions. They were not trained soloists from the temple choir, but common devout souls; they sang not what they knew, but the song that was given them; they sang not because they chose, but because they must. Heaven's hand swept over their sensitized souls as the breeze caresses the strings of an Æolian harp, and their response was as freely and beautifully given.

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You have heard quartets where each singer was a soloist, but so subjective to the theme and singing in such accordance with the others that the *ensemble* was perfect. So it is here. There are four who sing their solo part, but there is not a divergent strain, not an inharmonious note; the supreme *motif* is supported by each. Three of them, Elisabeth in her *Beatitude*, Zacharias in his *Benedictus*, and Simeon with his *Nunc Dimittis*, gather about and buoy up on the wings of their song the dominant note, the principal singer, Mary the Mother in her *Magnificat*. And if we catch the inner harmony of their song, we can feel it rise and swell until it blends in perfect accord with the note that Heaven sent to earth—to “shepherds abiding in the field”—the angelic *Gloria*.

“When the light of the Lord streamed o’er them,
And lo! from the heaven above,
An angel leaned from the glory,
And sang his song of love.
He sang, that first sweet Christmas
The song that shall never cease,
‘Glory to God in the highest,
On earth good will and peace.’”



Carl Bloch

ELISABETH AND MARY

I. ELISABETH'S BEATITUDE

Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.

And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things that were told her from the Lord.

(Luke 1. 42-45.)



MADONNA (DETAIL)

Botticelli

II. MARY'S MAGNIFICAT

My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

For he hath regarded the low estate of his hand-maiden; for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.

And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.

He hath showed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree.

He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.

He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy;

As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed forever.

(Luke 1. 46-55.)



Bouguereau

THE VIRGIN, INFANT JESUS, AND SAINT JOHN

III. ZACHARIAS' BENEDICTUS

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,

And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David;

As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:

That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;

To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant;

The oath which he sware to our father Abraham,

That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear,

In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;

To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins,

Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us,

To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

(Luke 1. 68-79.)

IV. SIMEON'S NUNC DIMITTIS

O Lord, now lettest
thou thy servant de-
part in peace, accord-
ing to thy word:

For mine eyes have
seen thy salvation,
Which thou hast
prepared before the
face of all people;

A light to lighten
the Gentiles, and the
glory of thy people
Israel.

(Luke 2. 29-32.)



Champaigne

PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE

V. ANGELS' CHORUS

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold,
I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be
to all people.

For unto you is born this day in the city of David
a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the
babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude
of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND ON
EARTH PEACE, GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN.

(Luke 2. 10-14.)



Ploekhorst

APPARITION TO THE SHEPHERDS



Bouguereau

NATIVITY

MARY

There's a tumult of joy
O'er the wonderful birth,
For the Virgin's sweet boy
Is the Lord of the earth.

Ay! the star rains its fire while the beautiful sing,
For the manger of Bethlehem cradles a King!

—*Josiah G. Holland.*

CHAPTER II

MARY



NATIVITY

Grass

A PROFOUND
mystery rests
upon the cradle
at Bethlehem.
No law of biology
yet discovered or
developed has
fully explained
it. No theologi-
cal statement
concerning it sat-
isfies either our

heart or intellect. No doctrine dispels the
marvel and the mystery of it. But so far as
that goes, every cradle holds a mystery that
leaves us wondering and questioning, and
only the commonness of the phenomenon of
birth rescues it from the miraculous. Every
appreciative mother can understand Holland
as he muses:

MARY

"Who can tell what a baby thinks;
Who can trace the gossamer links
By which the manikin feels his way
Out from the shore of the great unknown,
Blind and wailing and alone,
Into the light of day?"¹

Edwin Arnold, in his *Light of the World*, puts into the mouth of Mary Magdalene as, three years after the crucifixion, she talks to poor old Pilate, who, tormented by remorse, comes to ask her about the wonderful Being he had timidly tried to save, but whom his weak and cowardly policy had allowed to be condemned, these beautiful words:

"Sir, if thou shouldst pluck
A thousand lilies here in Galilee,
One would show whitest silver; one would have
Most gold at heart. And, sir, if thou shouldst fetch
A thousand pearls up from thy Arab sea,
One would gleam brightest, best.
In such wise, as I dare deem, He came
Of purest mother, Perfect Child, begot
Divinelier, surely, than we know; arrived
In this world—of his many worlds—by path
Leading to birth as new, as sweet, as strange,
As what his dear feet opened past the tomb.
If we should strive to say in mortal speech
Where he was man and why much more than man,
The earthly words would mar the heavenly truth."

Of the early life of Jesus we know little.

¹From "Bitter-Sweet," by Josiah G. Holland. Used by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

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That he developed the experiences as a boy which are common to normal boyhood we believe. Like other boys, he grew in stature; unlike many others, he grew also in a wisdom and knowledge the sources of which we cannot apprehend any more than we discern many of the invisible forces that play mysteriously in and upon the characters of our own children. But we feel that with Jesus, as with every other man, when we would estimate the natural forces which helped to make him, *we must seek out his mother.*

History and biography compel us to go back of many a favorite son of our race and divide his laurels with the woman who bore him. It was so with John Wesley, whose great parts were inherited from his mother, Susanna Wesley, and who was trained by her subtle hand. Walter Scott estimated that the power to write the Waverly novels was generated in the habits which his good mother imposed upon him of reading aloud to her works of poesy and imagination. Browning writes of his mother, "She was a divine woman," and acknowledges that from her he received his artistic temperament and musical talent. Abraham Lincoln said, "All that I am I owe to my angel mother." And in just this natural way Mary is the answer to much that we find in Jesus.

MARY

This does not compel us to believe in what is called the immaculate conception nor to accept the absurdities of Mariolatry. The Scriptures simply state that, in some mysterious way past our finding out, the Christ was born of the Virgin Mary, but they do not teach that she was divine. No explanation of the birth of Jesus can satisfy the critical mind. It is, like many other revelations in both the material and spiritual worlds, a statement which must be taken by faith. It is no more difficult to accept than many premises of industry and science out upon which men step with all their life interests every day.

The beautiful hymn, "Our Christ," by Harry Webb Farrington, admits the presence of mysteries we cannot solve, but emphasizes some blessed certainties at which we may all arrive:

"I know not how that Bethlehem's Babe
Could in the Godhead be:

I only know the Manger-Child
Has brought God's life to me.

"I know not how that Calvary's cross
A world from sin could free:

I only know its matchless love
Has brought God's love to me.

"I know not how that Joseph's tomb
Could solve death's mystery:

I only know a living Christ,
Our immortality."¹

¹Used by permission.

MARY THE MOTHER AND ALL MOTHERS

After the resurrection of Jesus every detail and the most minute circumstances concerning his life leaped into sudden importance. It is a matter for supreme congratulation that his mother, who would be, of course, the highest and unquestioned authority, upon his birth at any rate, was alive and in closest association with the apostles during the critical, formative period of the Christian Church. It may be accepted that Luke derived the facts from which he wrote from Mary herself and that John, in whose household she lived in Jerusalem, and possibly Ephesus, until she died, was inspired by what he gathered from her lips to that outburst of revelation which goes farther than any other of the writers and tells of the preexistence of Jesus from "the beginning," and that "he became flesh and dwelt amongst us."

Edwin Markham let his poetic imagination play upon those days when Mary lived in the home of John. The people came to see her face, to touch her garments, to hear her voice, to listen with bated breath as again and again she would tell of those events that had become so marvelous, and which the world still calls "The Beautiful Story."

"Once more you want to hear me tell?
We stopped to drink at David's Well

MARY

Before we reached the Inn. A calm
As of great peace was on the palm,
A bird flew to her happy nest,
A low bough hushed in evening rest;
And on the ridge beyond, a fox
Slipt to his hole among the rocks.

“That night of marvel and alarms
The Wonder-Babe was in my arms.
But when He came rose-white (the One
Who made the world and lit the sun)
There was no place where he could lay
His head, save in the ox’s hay—
Save in the ass’s humble stall:
So there we laid the Lord of All.
A yoke was leaning to the bed,
A fish-net hanging overhead;
And under yellow barley ricks
A hen was brooding on her chicks.

“Outside I heard the shepherds sing—
Then flashed the lightning of a wing!
There was quick fragrance in the air,
A sound of harpings everywhere;
And cries of far hosannas—cries
That silvered out of rifted skies;
And through the roof I could discern
The glory of the angels burn;
Till suddenly the little stall
Shone like a lighted palace hall;
And I was filled with rapture-rest,
For God was warm against my breast!”¹

“The Beautiful Story.” Used by permission of author.

MARY THE MOTHER AND ALL MOTHERS

We are so inclined to emphasize the supernatural among the influences that played upon the childhood of the Master that we have through the centuries since, minimized the merely natural elements that Mary and her home may, and indeed must, have contributed. We have too, on the other hand, so far recoiled from the idolatrous superstitions which have robbed him of a natural, human, though perfectly sufficient mother, that we have hesitated to even estimate her influence upon her child as that of a normal parent. In this way much of the Christian world has lost Mary the mother; childhood has lost the play upon it of the ideal motherhood; the Protestant faith has lost the leadership of a wonderful woman and some of the sweetness it has needed as it has sought to mold its children into the likeness of her Son.

The Mary of the Scriptures was a woman, and only a woman, and they do not impute to her any of the attributes of divinity. She was neither omniscient, omnipresent, nor omnipotent. When she lost her twelve-year-old boy, she is not represented as a goddess, like Demeter seeking her child, but just a wearied, anxious woman, searching like any other human mother for her little boy until she found him. And as any other might have done, she

MARY

said when they came upon him, "Here have your father and I been looking for you anxiously."

When the caravan they were with moved out from Jerusalem, Jesus in some way remained or was left behind. The record reads, "And Joseph and his mother knew not of it." No omniscient vision was bestowed upon her that enabled her to dispense with the watchful care that all mothers from time immemorial have given their children, and neglecting which, she must, sick at heart, search for him those three anxious days.

After his ascension, when his bewildered, despairing followers met in the upper room, Mary, it is said, continued with them "in prayer and supplication." She was not in that early church elevated above them, but we are told was simply a suppliant and worshiper with the rest of the apostles and disciples. If there had been any claim on the part of Mary, or any thought among the disciples that she was unique or in any sense supernatural, would not John, her adopted son, have made something of it, at least mentioned it? All the frantic efforts and absurd interpretations used to bring John to the support of Mary-worship only prove how valuable and necessary his testimony is considered. *Yet neither*

MARY THE MOTHER AND ALL MOTHERS

in his Epistles nor the Apocalypse does he even refer to it.

It is to be eternally regretted that the Roman Church could not have recognized the greatness of Mary as woman and mother and elevated thereby the beautiful qualities of motherhood without perverting their acknowledgment into Mariolatry. However, it is easy to understand and trace the process by which the natural human mother was transformed through the centuries into the Mary of tradition.

After Jesus had ascended and his real uniqueness grew upon his followers they very naturally magnified more and more the woman who had borne him. And when, later in the course of the centuries, the desire for human mediation between the Saviour and humanity led to the elevation of the early saints into mediators, and the custom of praying to them was foisted upon the church, his own mother would be regarded as one of the chief and most influential of those whose intercession was sought.

After the conquest of Rome by Christianity, the Roman Church in a conciliatory attitude endeavored to adapt itself to the customs and usages of paganism and adopted some of their feasts and festivals. And since the pagan

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peoples invariably worshiped female deities, almost insensibly perhaps, those early Roman Christians yielded to this attitude of their proselytes and allowed them to think of the mother of Jesus as a female divinity. Thus the innovation grew by contagion until it became accepted by the Roman Church.

Then, as Italian art began to decorate the imposing churches and cathedrals that the Romans built, with frescoes and the sculptures which finally led to the introduction of image worship, it was a most natural thing that Mary with her babe in her arms should become the most popular subject for artistic representation in those places of worship.

It was inevitable too that the great artists of Italy should not only find the largest scope for their artistic imagination and skill in this subject, but, as the worship of Mary grew among the people, it would also become the most profitable and remunerative. So Italian art filled their galleries and churches and palaces with the most splendid and charming representations of the Virgin and her Child that their genius could produce.

Unquestionably, too, the chivalry that characterized the Middle Ages, "when knighthood was in flower"; when every knight went forth with a vow to serve her and was proud to

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die with her name, "Sweet Mary," upon his lips; when the romantic tender sentiments with which the sex was regarded—settling upon Mary as the representative and universal woman, and enshrining all the graces with which their fervid imagination gifted womanhood—had a tremendous effect. Thus policy, art, avarice, and romance were added to religious devotion and became important influences in elevating Mary the mother into an object of worship transcending in its popularity that of her Son; for the Latin hymns of those centuries reveal that more than Jesus and all other saints and apostles, Mary was the object of loving devotion; and to-day on the rosaries of many millions of people in the Roman churches the Ave Maria comes ten times as often as the Paternoster.

The doctrine of the immaculate conception was the subject of debate and the cause of division in the Roman Church for many years. The Council of Trent refused to commend it, and the Dominicans and Franciscans, two important orders of priesthood, waged bitter contest over it for a long time. At last, but not until 1854, it was officially proclaimed by Pius IX and became a dogma of the church. A like process characterized the development of the claim that she was sinless. It was

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at first urged that she was miraculously made so at the birth of Jesus; later, however, it was taught that the sinless state began with her own birth; and then finally it was claimed that she had in neither soul nor body any taint of sin, original or actual.

Now, let it be admitted that back of this process, which we have only briefly sketched, were the natural workings of some very beautiful sentiments; that the tender touch of Mary-worship has softened the asperities of a harsh and unbending religion for many millions of sincere and devoted believers; yet we feel that it has been one of the saddest perversions and errors of Christian history, and has been too often directed by sinister motives and Machiavellian methods.

We believe that Mary would be among the very first to repudiate these claims. Indeed, with almost prophetic vision she seemed from the first to feel that she must take an attitude of gentle but firm protest against a tendency that was in the very nature of things bound to manifest itself. In her reply to Elizabeth's greeting, the whole tone of which (Luke 1. 42-45) is one of exaltation of herself, Mary expresses the most profound and beautiful humility. While she voices her appreciation of the blessed deed to be performed through her,

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on account of which "all generations shall call me"—not great, but—"blessed," she diverts all thought of glory or praise from herself.

She says, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." And, responding as this does to Elisabeth's rather fulsome praise of her, one can almost hear the emphasis she placed, "*My* soul doth magnify the *Lord*." Her rejoicing has in it no note of personal gratification: "*My* spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." She seemed to put away any feeling of pride that was merely personal and to distinctly rebuke any inclination to unduly elevate her person, by calling attention to her own humble condition: "he hath regarded the low estate" or humility "of his handmaiden." As though she said, "He hath chosen me, the betrothed of a carpenter, living in obscurity and poverty, unknown and unrecognized among all the daughters of Israel."

Tradition says that Mary deliberately chose to be ignored and unnoted throughout the whole career of her Son, and that she prevailed upon him to allow her to keep the "low estate of his handmaiden," from the very beginning to the end. Certainly, the deep self-abnegation which breathes from the *Magnificat*, and the otherwise bewildering attitude of

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what must have been a wonderful and gifted woman give color to it. At any rate, it indicates that she herself would disown the inventions and methods of Mariolatry which later came into existence.

In this tradition, too, many people may find satisfactory interpretation of an attitude of Jesus to his mother which they have not been able to fully understand. Luke tells us that on a certain occasion when his miracles and teachings were causing great wonderment among the people and they were offering various explanations of his strange power, "A certain woman of the company lifted up her voice and said unto him, 'Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.' " It gave splendid opportunity for a formal eulogy upon his mother which we would have welcomed from his lips. And his reply strikes with a certain disappointment until you read into it that perfect understanding there must have been between Mary and Jesus, and his sympathetic appreciation of how her sensitive soul would shrink from such a brazen public declaration. His response to the woman, however, pays his mother a beautiful, tender compliment, into which was compressed all his knowledge of how profoundly *she* had heard the word of God and at what

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tremendous expense *she* had kept that word, when he quietly though impressively—in contrast to the “shouting” voice—said, “Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.”

At the same time he deftly rebuked a tendency, which we may believe they both foresaw, to commit the very error which has since come about, as men, to explain him and his uniqueness, have replaced his wonderful, natural mother with a fetishism of superstition. In one of Keble’s songs there is a stanza which we feel interprets the spirit of both mother and Son :

“Blest is the womb that bore him, blest
The bosom where his lips were pressed;
But rather blest are they
Who hear his word and keep it well;
The living homes where Christ may dwell
And never pass away.”

We are compelled to believe that Mary would protest against the inventions and methods of Mariolatry which later came into existence, for they not only reflect upon her Son as the Exemplar of humanity, but they certainly cheapen and discredit Mary herself by the attempt to foist upon her the rôle of a demi-goddess. The highest dignity with which we may crown Mary is not an aureole about

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her head indicating that she was without "original sin"; that to be made worthy of her divine Son she was herself lifted into divinity. The teaching that the Spirit of God found a good, true woman the sufficient physical and psychical basis for the birth into this world of the Son of Man is the finest of all the fine things that have been said or written about woman. It hints at the inherent possibilities of the sex and constitutes a prophecy of the marvelous advancement and evolution of woman when she shall develop the unique qualities of her being and shall train her faculties for her peculiar tasks.

The salutation of the angel, "Hail, thou that art highly favored: the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou"—not above, but—"among women," identified Mary with her kind and really elevated woman and her whole destiny. This is the supreme exaltation of motherhood and womanhood everywhere and any good man seeing his child in the arms of its mother instinctively feels this, and may, without any taint of Mary-worship, cry out:

"O blest Maternity! Hushed on her bosom
In a light embrace, our baby sleeps,
Wrapped in its long white robe.
And as the flame, with soft auroral sweeps
Illuminates the pair, how like they seem
O Virgin Mother, to thyself and thine."

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The recoil of the Protestant world from what it considers a perversion of Scripture and the truth has, however, carried too far, and it is time for a revaluation of the mother of Jesus in the light of every known fact, and of a sane, natural interpretation. We may believe that when God set apart from Abraham a race whose peculiar genius should be religion, he designed that they should be the culture-field from which there should eventuate a human-divine product, the psychic development and fine quality of which should make it a responsive instrument to his Spirit, and through whose sublimated essences he might more fully reveal himself to humanity. Jesus Christ was the sublime flowering of centuries of intensive culture; he was the Rose of Sharon whose roots had been fed by ages of hope and faith reaching back to the first promise of him. Granting this, it is unthinkable that God should be indifferent to the woman who must give the last intimate touches of those centuries of preparation; who must endow his body, mold his mind and direct his unfolding personality.

If Solomon, under divine direction, lavished untold wealth and employed the highest human art and skill on the erection of one of the most beautiful temples in the world, but which

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with all its glory was to be only a type of him; if John the Baptist was sanctified before his birth that he might be his forerunner; if Paul, who was in a unique way to consummate his earthly plans, must be a "chosen vessel," then we must certainly presume that the plan of God would require the endowment of the woman who was to mother him with those qualities and graces which his birth and equipment required. Mary was prefigured by a long line of remarkable women which had been given to the world by the Hebrew race: Sara, Rebecca, Judith, Esther, Abigail, and the mother of the Maccabees—prototypes to be enrolled among whom constituted an honor passing any other of earth to which woman may aspire. But we believe that crowning this list of splendid mothers was the one selected to pour into the being of their Messiah all the spiritual and religious genius for which the Hebrew stands—and *that her name was Mary*. So, when the Protestant world recognizes the aureole upon the brow of the mother of Jesus it is only as a bit of symbolism by which it crowns motherhood and womanhood and accepts Mary as the supreme type.



Sassoferrato

MADONNA AND CHILD

For Christ is born of Mary,
And gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars, together
Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King,
And peace to men on earth!

—*Hymn.*

CHAPTER III

MOTHER MARY

IT has been stated that when Jesus from the cross gave his mother to John the apostle he symbolically gave her to all the world. Whether that be true or not, Mary belongs to the whole world and especially to the



C. Mueller

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woman-world. She may well be studied by mothers everywhere, for she is the type of a motherhood we must continue to develop if our civilization is to be perpetuated and if, in fulfillment of the old Hebrew ideals, "Our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; . . . our daughters . . . as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace." The

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Mary of tradition has become a fictitious and unnatural character, but the simple gospel story still leaves us Mary the woman, forever an example and incentive to her sex.

We must believe too that the equipment that was given to and achieved by her for her work may be claimed by mothers in general who face their tasks with her faith and courage. Mary has been termed "The second Eve," and the title suggests a contrast that may indicate the direction which womanhood must take in its further evolution. We are told that the first Eve disarranged the plans of a wise Creator by an act of disobedience and self-indulgence. But certainly the "second Eve" wiped out that old score against woman by an unparalleled act of obedience and self-renunciation. And these qualities must in some degree continue in and possess modern motherhood.

First of all, we presume that Mother Mary had in her heart that fountain of love and tenderness that surges up from some divine and eternal spring-source in true motherhood everywhere. We cannot think that the courtesy and tenderness of Jesus came to him instantaneously or in any miraculous way. We must believe that he drank it in with the life-current from his mother's breast and naturally absorbed it as he grew up in the

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Elizabeth Gardner

TWO MOTHERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

atmosphere where he watched her loving ministrations to her family.

Elizabeth Gardner has painted a notable picture, "Two Mothers and Their Families," in which a fond mother cuddling her little boy

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is caught by the vision of a hen mothering her brood. The tenderness which the artist brings out in the mother's face seems touched by a sort of musing realization that the passion possessing her is the primal, God-given impulse that underlies and nourishes all life in the animal and human kingdoms.

It is the most wonderful gift of the Creator, present in some degree in all the ranges of life, but coming to its supreme culmination and highest expression certainly in the human mother. In his *Ascent of Man*, Henry Drummond has a chapter on "The Evolution of a Mother" in which he asks, "Is it too much to say that the one motive of organic nature was to make mothers?" He himself replies: "It is at least certain that this was the chief thing she did. In as real a sense as a factory is meant to turn out locomotives or clocks, the machinery of nature is designed in the last resort to turn out mothers. You will find mothers in lower nature at every stage of imperfection; you will see attempts being made to get at better types; you find old ideas abandoned and higher models coming to the front. And when you get to the top you find the last great act was but to present to the world a physiologically perfect type. It is a fact that no human mother can regard with-

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out awe, which no man can realize without a new reverence for woman and a new belief in the higher meaning of nature, but the goal of the whole plant and animal kingdoms seems to have been the creating of a family, which the very naturalist has had to call mammalia. . . . A softened pressure of an uncouth hand, a human gleam in an almost animal eye, an endearment in an inarticulate voice—feeble things enough. Yet in these faint awakenings lay the hope of the human race.”¹

He then argues that with the coming of mothers, four cardinal virtues of civilization began to dawn upon humanity—patience, sympathy, carefulness, tenderness—and adds: “Love had no chance till the human mother came. . . . When the first mother awoke to the first tenderness and warmed her loneliness at her infant’s love, when for a moment she forgot herself and thought upon its weakness, or its pain; when by the most imperceptible act or sign or look of sympathy she expressed the unutterable impulse of her motherhood, the touch of a new creative hand was felt upon the world.”

Certainly, this passion of tenderness of which motherhood is the highest expression would

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be found in rich abundance in the heart of the woman selected to mother the One who was to reveal peculiarly to the world the sympathy and love of God. So we may believe that she made the home in Galilee a nesting place for her boy, where under abounding, brooding love and care, his expanding life of body and soul found every real human necessity. Our view of Mary has been so distorted through the centuries that it is difficult for many people to think easily and naturally of her and to conceive of her as a normal mother. But there is no justification in the Scriptures for any other thought concerning her. We must not rob the earthly relationship of Jesus and Mary of that naturalness which constitutes the greatest charm and influence in the relations of mother and child and for which all the fanciful, celestial associations and figures with which superstition has filled their lives could not compensate.

The great artists have been, as a rule, truer to the facts probably than the theologians, and some of them have succeeded in the portrayal of Mary and her child in the winsome poses and natural attitudes which we have often surprised in our own homes. Correggio, for instance, departing from the stilted pose which ecclesiasticism had imposed upon Italian

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art, has painted a natural Mary whose face is fairly inundated with the flood of mother-tenderness as she hovers over the form of her baby Boy. There is no reason why we should not allow her the ecstasies and pleasures that belong to normal mothers and behind which they hide for a time from the apprehensions with which every mother in some degree looks upon the coming years that would



Correggio

MADONNA (FROM HOLY NIGHT)

so quickly snatch her child from her arms. A modern mother has surely included Mary when she voiced the plea of mothers everywhere:

“Don’t grow old too fast, my dear!
Stay a little while
In this pleasant baby-land
Sunned by mother’s smile.

“For awhile be mine alone,
So helpless and so dear;
By-and-by you must go forth
But now, sweet, slumber here.”

(Anonymous.)

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Mary must especially have had a foreboding sense of the coming time, when more and more, day by day, the great world-mission he was on would win Jesus away from her arms, permitted to hold him for such a little while. But that was only possibly intensified in her which is common to all mothers everywhere. Ella Wheeler Wilcox tells in impressive verse of a mother whose baby had wearied, and finally dropping all his toys, cried out for her. She, however, herself tired and worn, signed the nurse to take him from the room, when

"Swift as lightning came the thought to me,
With pulsing heart throbs and a mist of blinding
tears,
Of days that are inevitable to be,
If my fair darling grows to manhood's years—

"Days when he will not call for a mama; when
The world, with many a pleasure and bright joy,
Shall tempt him forth into the haunts of men,
And I shall lose the first place with my boy;

"When other homes and loves shall give delight;
When younger smiles and voices will seem best.
And so I held him to my heart to-night,
Forgetting all my need of peace and rest."¹

Bodenhausen has given us a Madonna in

¹From "The Inevitable," by Ella Wheeler Wilcox, in her volume entitled "Poems of Pleasure." Used by permission of W. B. Conkey Company.

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MADONNA

Bodenhausen

which this feeling is stamped upon a face and glows from eyes of rare beauty.

Neither shall we in our desire to honor her Son deny him the experiences of dawning intelligence and growing comprehension by which every normal lad feels his way into the

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world and develops the natural correspondences with his material environment. First and chief among these must have been his mother. Holland has most exquisitely expressed this in the well remembered lines:

“What does he think of his mother’s eyes?
What does he think of his mother’s hair?
What of the cradle-roof that flies
Forward and backward through the air?
What does he think of his mother’s breast—
Bare and beautiful, smooth and white,
Seeking it ever with fresh delight—
Cup of his life and couch of his rest?
What does he think when her quick embrace
Presses his hand and buries his face
Deep where the heart-throbs sink and swell
With a tenderness she can never tell,
Though she murmur the words
Of all the birds—
Words she has learned to murmur well?”¹

We may safely imagine that one day he was only a frightened little babe, in a perfect frenzy of fear of this great, turbulent world into which he had come, and, choking with sobs, was caught up to Mary’s heart, folded in her arms, pillowed on her bosom, while little inarticulate cooings, broken snatches of lullabies, queer little sounds that are the universal language of mothers and utterly unin-

¹From “Bitter-Sweet,” by Josiah G. Holland. Used by permission of Charles Scribner’s Sons.

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telligible to any but babies, flow from her lips to the tempo of soothing little love-pats of the mother hand. And then the sobs give place to fluttering catches of breath; they die away into restful sighs; the rigid little form relaxes, the wondering eyes sense one grateful, comforted recognition of the mother-face and in sweetest slumber contentedly close.

Even now perhaps many of us who have come a long way on the adventure of life instinctively reach up through the mist of the years for the feel of her tender arms and the comfort of the soothing childhood caress which we have never been able to forget. It is related that when President Nott, of Union College, was over ninety years old, the memory of his mother's tenderness was so fresh that he could be hushed to needed slumber by a gentle patting of a hand upon the shoulder and the singing of an old-time lullaby. Overseas a group of soldier boys were kneeling by the torn body of a comrade who had just been brought in from the battlefield of the World War, and one of them expressed a feeling that is well-nigh universal when he broke out into this little prayer: "O Lord, we are just a lot of motherless boys needing your comfort and help."

There are eighteen years of the life of Mary

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and her Son of which we have no accurate knowledge, but it may be permitted a sane and reverent imagination to play upon the recorded facts. They must have lived in quiet seclusion in the simple Galilæan home while the boy developed into a youth and the youth changed to manhood. Good taste and reason protest against the legends and fiction with which a superstitious fancy has distorted the simple Gospel story—a story we cannot help wishing was a little more replete, but a story all the more credible for its restraint, and a story of which we may see some reflection all about us where good motherhood in fullest devotion ministers to unfolding childhood. Edwin Arnold was inspired to hang before us this beautiful picture of those early days:

“Days followed on days like any childhood’s passing;
And silently sat Mary at her wheel,
And watched the boy-Messiah as she spun;
And as a human child unto its mother
Subject the while—he did her low-voiced bidding;
Or, gently came to lean upon her knee,
And ask her the thoughts that in him stirred
Dimly, as yet, or with affection sweet,
Tell, murmuring of his weariness—and then
All tearful-hearted (as any mother
Unutterably fond, while touched with awe—)
She paused—or with tremulous hand spun on.”

We can feel from the gospel narrative that Mary comprehended something of the travail

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that awaited her Son. How much of the plan of redemption, which centered around him, she understood we cannot fully know. It is only unreliable tradition which declares that to fit her for her task as his mother the part that Jesus was to play in it was supernaturally revealed to her by a miracle. One of the great artists, Hofmann, has made the Annunciation of the angel to catch her when she, upon her knees, was reading the Hebrew Scriptures. It is a revealing touch, for she was unquestionably a devoted student of them and the history of her people. The Annunciation of the angel, the Beatitude of Elisabeth and the prediction of Zacharias proclaimed the greatness of her Son. But Simeon's *Nunc Dimittis* foretells that he is to be more than the Hebrew Messiah: "A Light to lighten the Gentiles." This seemed to be in confirmation of what she herself was moved to proclaim in her *Magnificat*, which reveals her as among the forward-looking of her race who were anxiously awaiting His advent; and the language of which shows her intimate knowledge of the hopes and expectations concerning the coming Redeemer.

So we can imagine the intensity with which she must have ceaselessly watched through the youth of Jesus for the signs of his response to the high mission her own words had fore-

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cast for him, but the nature of which she could only dimly conceive. There is a hint of this in the gospel record. Luke tells us (2. 19) concerning the significant things that Jesus said and that were said about him, "But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart." It is a trait common to mothers according to Laman Blanchard :

" 'Tis a mother's large affection,
Hears with a mysterious sense,
Breathings that escape detection;
Whispers faint, and fine inflection
Thrill in her with power intense.
Childhood's honeyed words untaught,
Hiveth she in loving thought—
Tones that never hence depart,—
For she listens with her heart."

Among "these things" that must have impressed her were the predictions of their prophets concerning the Messiah, the astounding statements of the angel, the adoration of the shepherds, and the inspired utterances of Elisabeth, Zacharias, Anna, and Simeon. Luke also, in recording the words of Jesus, when his parents after having lost him found him in the temple, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" significantly adds (2. 51) : "But his mother kept all these sayings in her heart."

These statements bring to the imagination

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a stirring picture of Mary. We feel that the revelation of his mission to Jesus was a gradual one; that it unfolded with his youth and the expansion of all his physical and psychical powers. As his soul awakened and there came the growing consciousness of his relation to his Father's kingdom it must have been that there would fall from his lips significant utterances, bits of his dreams, fragments of his visions and hints of the aspirations that were leading him on, which slowly, under the direction of the Spirit of God, shaped themselves into coherent ideals if not plans. There must have been, too, a great deal of pondering and brooding in the heart of Jesus himself over things he could tell to none but the heavenly Father. Yet unquestionably he must have sometimes come to his mother, as naturally as any boy does to a true mother, with his doubts and questions; and there must have been many intimate confidences about that mission which she saw emerging bit by bit, and which was possessing him day by day.

As one from some height sees a landscape appear through a fog which slowly lifts above mountain and plain, or as one watches a puzzle-picture piece by piece assume shape and coherency, so Mary, intently watching the unfolding of a plan which she had sensed only

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in detached bits of sections, saw things so startling and mysterious, and so portending, that she dared not divulge them to any about her, but could only "treasure" them deeply in her own mother-heart and with something akin to awe "ponder" over them.

Her knowledge of the Messianic prophecies would certainly include some of the predictions of hardship that were to attend the way of their Messiah. It is said that she saw in the three days in which he was lost to them in the Temple a foreshadowing of the three years of his public ministry, in which he was substantially lost to them; and also the three days he was to spend in the grave. This is, of course, fiction. But as she pondered over the significant things he said and did through his early youth, and aligned them with the things said by the prophets about him, she must have become conscious of the converging forces and agencies which were to sweep him from her arms to terrible and dizzy heights where she could not follow. Jesus himself had said (Mark 9. 12), "It is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at naught." Simeon had told her as he prophesied the uniqueness of her Son, "Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also." Perhaps those years of apprehension and fear

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were the sword; if so, it must have been plunged to the hilt into the heart of Mary time and time again.

She would certainly have remembered, and perhaps applied in the keenest agony, the words Isaiah had spoken of their Messiah:

“He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness, and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.” In her reply to Elisabeth she had referred to “my Saviour.” Did she not recall the picture the prophet drew of him?

“Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows. . . . He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. . . . And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and he was afflicted; . . . he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter; . . . He was taken from prison and from judgment; . . . he was cut off out of the land of the living: . . . yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief.”

It must have been that sometimes, overcasting the bright day, would loom shadows from the future that chilled her heart with appre-

hension and fear. The artists have insisted upon thrusting the cross with its sinister message to Mary into many a scene bright with the joys and pleasures of her motherhood. In one of them—"The Rest in Egypt" (Bouguereau)—after a hard day of travel through the desert, Joseph and Mary have come to a beautiful oasis, where they rest. Mary is watching her boy as he essays the first tottering steps that are always so momentous to a fond parent. The setting sun is throwing the palms and tropical foliage into grateful shadows, when suddenly in an effort to maintain his balance the boy throws out his arms, and the cruel light catches his pose and thrusts it, the dark shadow of a cross, at the feet of his mother as she stoops to catch him, and over her face creeps another shadow that settles with the falling night, but which will not lift when the morning sun drives away the shadow of material things, for it settles upon a heart already overfull of shadows and care.

Hofmann has conceived a scene of domestic beauty and bliss with Mary at her distaff, Joseph, adze in hand, at work on a piece of timber, while the boy Jesus has been playing about their feet with a measuring-rule and some pieces of wood. As he moves into the foreground of the picture they are carelessly

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thrown over his shoulder and are made to fall into the outlines of a cross, an artistic prophecy, doubtless, of that day adown the future when they shall put upon his shoulder a cross he may not bear but which must bear him. The boy, of course, does not understand the significance, but it throws a shadow over the faces of Joseph and Mary as they note the portent and look into each other's eyes. Perhaps the fancy of the artists was truer to fact than we might think. For, while the shadows may not have assumed the outline of an impending cross, they must in some form have lain athwart all the way of those years especially heavy upon the heart of Mary.

We wonder too if on his part, as he began to sense more clearly his mission and its un-



Hofmann

THE CHILDHOOD OF CHRIST

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escapable end, Jesus did not comprehend something of the tragedy it would be to that mother of his, and the sorrow from which he could not defend her. Perhaps the tender picture that Theodosia Garrison Faulks draws with her verse may not be all poesy, but may be true to the veriest fact:

"Mary smiled on her little Son,
 'Now, why hast thou left thy play?'
 'But to touch thy hands with my hands, mother,
 Lest some time there come a day
When I may not close them within mine own
 Though they fall as hurt doves may.'

"Mary smiled on her little Son,
 'Now blind would'st thou have me go
That mine eyes thou hast closed with kisses twain?'
 'My mother, I may not know,
But I fear a day when they look on pain
 And I may not close them so.'

"Mary smiled on her little Son,
 Close, close in her arms pressed he,
 'O, mother, my mother, my heart on thine
 Lest some time a day may be
When I may not comfort nor make it whole
 Though it break for love of me.'"¹

But through all the centuries good mothers have watched mysterious processes of life bear down upon their sons, have treasured up "words in their heart" which they did not

¹Used by permission of the author.

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understand, but have gone faithfully on about the very ministrations and tasks which have finally led them along a *Via Dolorosa* to the summit of some Golgotha; and so it was with Mary.

If a height may be measured by the shadow it casts, if a cause may be estimated by its effect, if the testimony of great men—an acknowledgment so well-nigh universal as to constitute a law of human life—is that the elements of their greatness were imparted by or through the women who gave them birth, *then in all consistency* Mary must have been a wonderful mother. What the Scriptures have to say about her and her own recorded words as we study and meditate upon them reveal a personality fairly aglow with the human graces and qualities that became incandescent in her Son.

As he entered his public ministry they said of him, "Never man spake as he spake." But we must remember that at twelve years of age "they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers." (Luke 2. 46-47.) Where may you find a satisfactory explanation of such a scene? We must revert to his mother, whose

MARY THE MOTHER AND ALL MOTHERS

early training of him in Hebrew history and doctrine made him an object of loving admiration to the frequenters of the Temple. And it was this training too which enabled him to finally think his way through the cumbrous form and ritualism of his day and people to the very core of their faith and to the primal principles that underlay not only their own but all the great religions.

Jesus was a wonderful story-teller, but we feel that those firm, deft strokes with which he painted so vividly his word-pictures were cultivated in the quiet and restfulness of the home in Galilee, where Mary's imagination played up the heroic tales and traditions gathered from the long, eventful centuries of her people's history, and which she marshaled before him in the most wonderful movie a child ever watched. And it must have been from her lips that he learned the beauty and the use of the short, terse, but descriptive words and terms that make his utterances literature.

His judgments and estimates of the people with whom he mingled and dealt amounted to a genius; but his profoundest impressions of our human nature must have come from his most constant companion through thirty years—his mother; and from her too that profound tender sympathy with the common man that

MOTHER MARY

led him to cry, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Next to his sinlessness, perhaps the most astounding thing about him was the high courage with which he moved steadily forward under the growing shadow of the cross to the agony of Gethsemane and the suffering and death of Golgotha; but not a whit less than that of her Son's was the obedient courage with which Mary accepted her mission when she said to the announcing angel, "Be it unto me according to thy word"; a mission that had in it requirements of self-renunciation, humiliations for her pure womanhood, and the possibilities of the most exquisite suffering of which the human life is capable.

And the spirit of her sacrifice so touchingly registered in her *Magnificat* reveals—if we could correctly translate its real meaning—an almost hilarious abandon, certainly the same quality of joy that so possessed her Son as he moved toward Golgotha that Paul cried out at him, "Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame." So too it must have been through her eyes that he first began to see peering out from behind the framework of the material universe the face of "Our Father who art in

heaven," and whose presence so suffused its forms and substances with the real essences of life, with spiritual beauty and meanings, that for Jesus the earth and heaven always overlapped, the secular and the sacred blended and he constantly moved, worked, and had his being in the kingdom of heaven.

She must have been the first to call his attention to the lovely garments with which the lilies of the field were so wondrously arrayed, and taught, and lived before him, the trust that naturally appropriated the divine care and prompted him to say to the rest of us, "How much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?" So, back of all the attributes and shining through all the qualities of his sublime manhood, we may sense the presence and influence of his wonderful mother. And increasingly to our maturing thought upon the subject this becomes so apparent that we join in the adoration of nineteen centuries and justify her vision: "All generations shall call me blessed."

PART TWO



From painting by Carlo Dolci

MADONNA

Pitti Gal

“Happy he
With such a mother! faith in womankind
Beats with his blood, and trust in all things high
Comes easy to him, and though he trip and fall
He shall not blind his soul with clay.”

—*Tennyson.*

CHAPTER IV

MOTHER WELCOME

THE superlative thing which Mary did for her Son was to gladly welcome him into the world and to accept the responsibilities of her peculiar motherhood. And this was in spite of conditions which in these modern times are urged as excuses for inadequate and even childless homes. We have a hint of the poverty of Joseph and Mary in the circumstances attending the birth of Jesus. It would seem probable that he was born in a stable, not because a woman in Mary's condition could not have been provided for in some way, if she had had the price, but because his parents were unable to compete with the wealthier patrons who were crowding the little town of Bethlehem at that time. Amos R. Wells makes his "Bethlehem Innkeeper" to lament:

"What could be done? The inn was full of folk,
His honor, Marcus Lucius, and his scribes
Who made the census; honorable men
From farthest Galilee, come hitherward
To be enrolled; high ladies and their lords;

MOTHER WELCOME

The rich, the rabbis, such a noble throng
As Bethlehem had never seen before,
And may not see again. And there they were,
Close herded with their servants, till the inn
Was like a hive at swarming-time, and I
Was fairly crazed among them.

“Could I know
That they were so important? Just the two.
No servants, just a workman sort of man,
Leading a donkey, and his wife thereon
Drooping and pale. I saw them not myself,
My servants must have driven them away;
But had I seen them, how was I to know?
Were inns to welcome stragglers, up and down
In all our towns from Beersheba to Dan,
Till He should come? And how were men to know?

“There was a sign, they say, a heavenly light
Resplendent; but I had no time for stars,
And there were songs of angels in the air
Out on the hills; but how was I to hear
Amid the thousand clamors of an inn?

“Of course, if I had known them, who they were
And who was He that should be born that night,
For now I learn that they will make Him king,
A second David, who will ransom us
From these Philistine Romans—who but He
That feeds an army with a loaf of bread,
And if the soldier falls, he touches him
And up he leaps, uninjured?—Had I known,
I would have turned the whole inn upside down,
His honor, Marcus Lucius, and the rest,
And sent them all to stables, had I known.

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"So you have seen Him, stranger, and perhaps
Again will see Him. Prithee say for me
I did not know; and if He comes again,
As He will surely come, with retinue,
And banners and an army, tell my Lord
That all my inn is His to make amends.
Alas, alas! to miss a chance like that!
This inn that might be chief among them all,
The birthplace of Messiah—had I known!"¹

There was probably "room in the inn" for those who could pay for its services. Avarice, one of the besetting sins of humanity, which in the heart of Judas determined the manner of his death, seems to have also fixed the place of the birth of our Lord.

It may possibly have been a part of the program for his life, that he was to be peculiarly identified with the poverty-stricken multitudes of earth, by not only his attitude and sympathy, but by the fact that his grave must be the gift of a friend and his cradle must be the manger of a stable. And such a stable! There is no subject upon which the world's greatest artists have so lavished their genius as the Nativity, and many of them have been unable to resist the religious tendencies and superstitions of their day; their fervid imaginations have touched the event with the high lights which to them it seemed to deserve.

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MOTHER WELCOME

Religious art has not only taken the Scripture accounts—the first and second chapters of Matthew and Luke—which in beautiful simplicity and becoming restraint have given us the real story, but have worked in all the Apocryphal books, the queer legends and the fanciful stories with which men have sought through the centuries to embroider with symbol and allegory the event.

There is no more interesting study in the world of art than the attempts to blend harmoniously the evident poverty of the scene with the wealth—in the form of angelic visitors, celestial light, and divine music—which heaven, in recognition of the significance of the occasion, would be presumed to pour over it. Probably no other event of history was ever so staged with such startling contrasts—the high lights and the deep shadows and the possibility of picturesque detail which artists seek—as the birth of this helpless little Babe.

Converging upon him were all the issues of human history. Gathering about his little head were the forces of celestial love and the sinister forces of human hate. Hovering over his manger-cradle were angelic song and earthly discord; race-old hopes and bitter fears; heaven's smile and men's curses; and the attempt to portray all this in pictures has

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often resulted in things ridiculous and grotesque as well as confusing to faith and belief.

It would seem, however, that in a cave in the hills bordering the town of Bethlehem, where was a sort of public stable to which the shepherds often drove their flocks for shelter,



Lerolle

ARRIVAL OF THE SHEPHERDS

Joseph and Mary at last, after being turned perhaps from many a door, found refuge. And there the Christ was born.

Then, too, the offering which Joseph later was able to bring to the temple, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons, suggests

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that the home in which Mary reared her boy was one, not of destitution perhaps, but certainly of poverty of quite an extreme type. This is borne out by a study of many recorded incidents of his life, and the parables he taught. They portray to a sympathetic imagination pictures of things he must have experienced and with which he had intimate touch in a home of at least comparative want.

His reference to the two women turning the heavy millstones to grind the corn (Matt. 24. 41), the action of the leaven as it "raised" the meal in which it was hidden (Matt. 13. 33), the heating of the oven with no better fuel than "the grass of the field" (Matt. 6. 30), show that he was familiar with the severe methods by which bread was provided in the homes of the poor of his day, and that as a child he had perhaps watched so often his mother at the task of bread-making that he thoroughly understood and, indeed, may have helped in it. When he would illustrate the care of the heavenly Father by the provision with which an earthly parent serves his children with good food he makes "fish" to be their meat diet and contrasts its desirability with a "serpent" (Matt. 7. 10); and yet fish was the cheap meat purchased by the very poor.

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He was probably the eldest of what to-day would be a good-sized family—four brothers and two sisters—and he knew not only what it was to be hungry himself, but he had often seen his hungry brothers and sisters come crying to Mary for bread. And is it not suggested that many times he must go without rather than take what the younger children required (Mark 7. 27)? When he would represent the supreme need of the world—his Gospel and Revelation—he put it into a picture of bread, saying, “I am the bread of life.” So his sympathy with the common, hungry people of whom he knew much led him doubtless to place in the matchless prayer he taught the disciples as its first petition, “Give us this day our daily bread” (Matt. 6. 11). Did he not get the thought of the irrepressible power of his Gospel and the impossibility of restraining it within the limits of old truths by watching his mother use, in the interests of economy, the old wine-skin, too long, so that the new wine finally burst it and was wasted; or, saw her try to extend the usefulness of an old coat by patching it for him, when he knew that the old cloth must suffer a worse rent thereby (Mark 2. 21, 22)? He remembered all his life what a commotion the lost piece of money made in their small community. From

MOTHER WELCOME

the standpoint of the poverty of his boyhood home how interpretive as well as pathetic become many of these incidents and utterances of his after life!

But it needs to be noted by parents everywhere that all the wealth of all the world; all the elaborate conveniences of a mansion could never in themselves have taken the place of the welcome and love, which 'midst barren



BIRTHPLACE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN,
NOLIN CREEK, KENTUCKY

want, Mary extended to her child. As a modern illustration of this world-old truth, one which the biographies of the greatest and best of our race would ever teach our pampered age, it is interesting to remember that Abraham Lincoln, the great Emancipator, was born

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in a primitive loghouse which, in comparison, was but little better and may not have been as good as the birthplace of Christ. But in its rude shelter he found a mother whom he acknowledged as the author of all that was worth while in his life.

Many mothers despise this the most priceless gift they may make to their children while they cry with envious and bitter spirit for mere things of infinitely lesser value. It is possible that Mary, too, felt some of this, and perhaps Edwin Markham was right when he touched her with a little natural feeling of envy as she looked upon the gifts the wise men had brought to her boy:

“Hark, baby, hark,
To the bells in the dark.
Here are three that are led by the star—
Melchior and Gaspar and swart Baltazar.
Great are the gifts in the hands of the wise—
Mother has only a kiss for your eyes.

“Croon, baby, croon,
Like a dove at the moon.
Melchior with beard reaching down to the knees,
Pours you the gold from the hills and the seas,
Brings you a gift for a king to command—
Mother has only a kiss for your hand.

“Sleep, baby, sleep,
For the shadows are deep.
Gaspar with pearls on his red turban comes,
Bringing you myrrh and Arabian gums.

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The wind where he passed is delicate sweet—
Mother has only a kiss for your feet.

“Dream, baby, dream,
For the star is a gleam.
Baltazar kneels by the manger and sings,
Burning white frankincense, rings over rings.
They have brought treasure from mountain and mart—
Mother has nothing to give but her heart!”¹

Every child that is born into the world deserves a welcome, and nothing, nor all things else, can compensate for its absence.

This must be said while we acknowledge that children are a tremendous liability. Their responsibility may not be lightly nor carelessly faced. To build an immortal soul, launch it safely upon the sea of life, navigate it through the shipping in the sheltered harbor to the Golden Gate where, all equipped and furnished, it may safely drop the mother-pilot and sail out onto the great trackless ocean—this is no holiday sport, but requires sacrifice and toil and care. As Edward Guest hints in one of his poems, “What a Baby Costs,” it is an expensive undertaking:

“‘How much do babies cost?’ said he,
The other night upon my knee,
And then I said: ‘They cost a lot;
A lot of watching by a cot,

¹Used by permission of author.

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A lot of sleepless hours and care,
A lot of heartache and despair,
A lot of fear and trying dread,
And sometimes many tears are shed
In payment of our babies small.
But every one is worth it all.'"¹

"Precious cares," said a mother, speaking of her three children. We knew what she meant. The care of a child, its training and education to anyone who has a proper sense of parental duty, is one of the most taxing of human responsibilities. Except to mothers of wealth it means the sacrifice of leisure, comfort, and many esteemed privileges. And yet it has such compensations that some of the chief and most exquisite joys of life come through this self-sacrificing ministration. The care involved is perplexing and exhausting, but it opens up a fresh fountain of happiness in the very depths of the inner life.

What it meant for Mary to welcome this baby any modern woman will know, and the reflections she must meet and bear were intensified rather than lessened by the social conditions of her time and the ideals of her race for their women. But deep and profound was the joy Jesus met as he came over the threshold of his earthly home. Mary's faith soars above

¹From *A Heap o' Livin'*, copyrighted by Reilly & Lee Co., and used by permission.

MOTHER WELCOME

every difficulty and stigma, and she sings it in her *Magnificat*, the most beautiful of all the Christmas carols with which the Christian centuries have celebrated his birth:

“My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his hand-maiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.”

It is this note of welcome that most of the artists have caught and worked into their conceptions. Dr. Henry van Dyke, in his *The Childhood of Jesus Christ*, says: “Mary is almost always shown as wondrously happy; sometimes, as in Murillo’s ‘Adoration of the Shepherds,’ lifting the cloth that covers the Child and displaying him with gentle pride; sometimes, as in Correggio’s lovely little picture at Dresden, bending over him in a sweet rapture of tenderness which makes her very hands tremble with joy.” He then adds: “All worthy representations of the Nativity in art . . . should have, I think, this one quality in common: they should make the interest of every figure in the picture center in the Child; and most of all, the mother’s interest.”¹ In doing this the artists have caught one of the

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profoundest meanings of the Incarnation. Into a distinct contrast to this our modern society to-day throws many a mother and her child. Mary is an indictment of that type of mother which considers the advent of a child only in the light of an irritating interruption to the excitements of social life and who leaves its rearing and education to hirelings while she ignores its mute appeal in the dizzy whirl of society. Mary the mother is too an indictment of that type of frivolous selfish American motherhood which offers upon the altars of a luxurious pampered self, the gifts of wealth and leisure, and repudiating the obligations of motherhood—even to the limit of child-murder—sometimes lavishes the misdirected maternal impulses upon a dog.

The great illustrator, Kerr, some time ago hit this sort of thing in a picture not easily forgotten. He drew a newsboy, sheltering himself in the protection of a great bank building from a terrific storm of snow and sleet which raged with blinding fury up the streets of a city. With his hands in his pockets, a few papers under his arm, the little fellow crouches in the protection of the entrance, when there descended from a carriage a beautiful woman, clad in sable and the very picture of comfort and luxury. And out from under

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the furs which wrap her round, from its warm place in her bosom, peeps the impertinent nose of a poodle dog. The shivering boy looks at it as she sweeps past and says, "Gee! I wisht I was a dog."

Modern mothers need to realize that in a way they, like Mary, bring to the world its Saviours. There is an old Arabian legend of a magician who had such mystic sense that he was enabled to hear the first footfalls of children all over the world, and out of the beat of millions of little feet was able to mark especially the footstep of the Child of Destiny who was to be for his generation the Master of the Magic Lamp. But it requires no mystic sense to discern that in some mother's arms lies the modern Child of Destiny, and that in every mother's hands is a possible Master of the Magic Lamp.

When Achilles was nine years old it was foretold that without him the Greeks might never hope to win Troy. It illustrates a more general prophecy that may be made of all children and almost any child. All the dreams and ideals of prophets, seers, and singers; all the Golden Ages and Utopias that men have predicted; all the heights of human progress to which they have aspired can be realized only through the child. This becomes strik-

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ingly true in the fact that Jesus "the Word became flesh" and dwelt among us as a child; that he, "the Desire of the Nations," the Messiah of the Hebrews and the fulfillment of the religious hopes of all the past, came as a little child. And as God the Father set him, the Eternal Child, in the midst of his redemptive scheme, so when Jesus himself estimated the real forces of human greatness through which his kingdom should unfold, he too "set a child in the midst."

It is significant that there is but one child in the *Iliad*; most of the ancient books have none and in ancient literature one finds no lullabies or cradle-songs. The Greek estimate of childhood may be gathered from the fact that Socrates is said to have sneered at the sorrow of a young mother over the death of her baby. Plato recommended that each town should have on its outskirts a sort of pen in which inferior and undesirable children might be exposed. He says: "If an exposed child is strong, a farmer who needs slaves can claim it. But if sickly, let it be abandoned in some secret and mysterious place. Decency, however, should be observed." Seneca, the Roman "Seeker after God," declared: "We destroy rabid dogs, we kill a fierce ox, on sheep we let drive the iron, and likewise we should

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drown children if they are born disabled. It is not wrath but reason that separates weak children from the strong." Augustus Cæsar, it is said, narrowly escaped destruction in his childhood, which was sickly, because Octavia, his mother, seriously contemplated his exposure. Aristotle in his endorsement of what we to-day call eugenics recommended that the parents of children who were inferior in stature should be drowned. In that ancient world the child had no standing, and there seemed to be no sense of his potential value as the seed of the future.

But Jesus was not only the discoverer of childhood; he became its champion and into his indorsement of the child he put the full force of his Gospel and the kingdom he founded. He opposed the whole creed of the Spartan, and when it was said of him, "A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench" (Matt. 12. 20), there was revealed the attitude of Christianity to the weak and helpless of humanity everywhere. But when he "set the child in the midst" his act was perhaps the most dynamic and revolutionary of his whole wonderful career. "And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be con-

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verted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones



Plockhorst

CHRIST BLESSING LITTLE CHILDREN

which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matt. 18. 2-6).

In this act and his discernment of the possibilities of childhood, the genius of Jesus towers above all human greatness, and his ability to

lead our race into its final Golden Age is demonstrated; for he here sets forth the source of humanity's power and indicates the path of

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its progress. One of the finest English thinkers of this century, J. Brierly, in an essay, "Sex in Religion," wrote: "The real progressive movement, against which all the reactionist forces fight in vain, is the birth of a child. They are powerless against that new generation which brings its own way of looking at things. Earthquakes are trifles compared with this upheaving force. Tyrants should tremble at the cradle. Were they logical, they would follow the Herod-legend and slay all Bethlehem's children."¹

You may appropriately hush your soul when you stand by a cradle, for God is very near. The sleeping inmate is the latest miracle from his hand. It is his most recent declaration of his eternal hatred of sin and his most strategic act in the disposal of his forces for the final defeat of injustice and inequity. We are taught this especially of the cradle of Bethlehem, but every cradle holds history and human destiny compressed into a small package of incalculable potentiality. A manifold life lies wrapped in its swaddling clothes, subtle forces lie dormant ready to be awakened, and mysterious amalgams await the

¹ From *Ourselves and the Universe*. Used by permission of Congregational Publishing Society, publishers.

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necessary conditions for their fusing. It is God's latest and best message of hope to the weary old world. An excerpt from a poem—"One of These Little Ones"—by Elsa Barker, expresses most eloquently this thought:

"You are the Dream made flesh. You are the grail
Pilgrim—another, passionate and frail,
Leaving the House of Beauty for the quest
Of that high vision by no man possessed.
Indomitable must be God's desire
To realize Life's secret and acquire
Mastery, when he sends you one by one,
Eternally, to question the bright sun
And the dark earth and the indifferent stars!
O Baby, will you pass the golden bars
Guarding the pathway to the great abode?
Or will you leave your dust to make the road
Softer to one who follows?"¹

It has been said, "Save an adult and you save a unit; save a child and you save the multiplication table." The truth of this has been such a long time in getting to the thought of humanity that one wonders at the patience of the Almighty. When Dr. Charles H. Fowler resigned the pastorate of a large church to accept the presidency of a university, one of his congregation expostulated with him for leaving the teaching of men to become, as he called it, a teacher of boys. The doctor replied:

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MOTHER WELCOME

"If you wanted to write your name on a brick so it would remain, would you write it when the clay was plastic and impressible or after it had become hardened?" The question needed no answer. Anything which one generation wishes to accomplish for a succeeding one can be done through the training of childhood. Benjamin Kidd in his *The Science of Power* writes: "The stupendous potentiality of civilization as distinct from barbarism consists in its cultural or collective heredity imposed on the rising generation under suitable conditions. The power which is represented thereby is capable of creating a new world in the lifetime of a generation. It is capable of sweeping away in a single generation any existing order of the world." He points to the use by Germany of this power—the training and education of childhood—as "the greatest event in modern history," and then adds: "In that process in modern Germany by which the psychology of a whole people was changed in a generation the fundamental fact to be grasped is, that the seat and center of the vast experiment throughout the whole period of accomplishment was in the mind of the young—if the national ideals which were placed in the foreground had not been atavistic and had been in line with the meaning of

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evolving civilization it is not too much to say that there is nothing which modern Germany could not have accomplished in the world by the means employed.”¹

Some day this latent, limitless power of the rising generation will be utilized by the social machinery of these modern times and geared on to the ideals of a Christian civilization shall make “the wilderness to blossom as the rose.” Some day the whole world is going to stand with the mothers of earth by the cradles of their children and insist that in addition to the material blessings of the home necessary to develop its highest reaches of power, every child shall find awaiting it the warm welcome and love which Mary so devotedly bestowed upon her Boy. The “swaddling clothes” in which every home shall wrap its baby must be love like hers. Lucy Larcom, in a little bit of verse, speaks a sentiment that must become universal:

“What shall we wrap the baby in?

Silks are too coarse and velvets too rough,

Snowiest linens not half white enough:

A web for his blanket what fairy can spin?

What shall we wrap the baby in?”

¹ From *Science of Power*, by Benjamin Kidd. Courtesy of G. P. Putnam's Sons, publishers. New York and London.

MOTHER WELCOME

"The softest of colors
may cover his
bed,
Delicate hues of
the sky and the
rose,
Tints of all buds
that in May
morns uncloze,
When on the bosom
of sleep drops
his head,
Wrap him in some-
thing more
heavenly, in-
stead!



Grass

MADONNA

"What shall we wrap the baby in?
Nothing that fingers have woven will do:
Looms of the heart weave love ever new:
Love, only love, is the right thread to spin,
Love we must wrap the baby in."

¹ Used by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company, publishers.



Peter Janssen

MADONNA AND CHILD

"So many names, so many fames,
Have echoed through the earth;
So many deeds, so many creeds,
So much of change found birth;
But through the eons onward whirled,
Unaltered, undefiled,
Two figures dominate the world—
A Mother and a Child."

—*Ella Bently Arthur*,

CHAPTER V

MOTHER EQUIPMENT

THE spirit of Mary rebukes the feeling in the world to-day which underestimates the necessity of the finest possible equipment and training for motherhood, and it furnishes inspiration for mothers



C. Mueller

MADONNA

everywhere to prepare themselves for this the very highest of earthly tasks. There is a well-supported tradition that Mary, a maiden so beautiful that she was called "Jericho's Fairest Rose," sprang from an ancient royal family of both the tribes of Judah and Levi, was educated in the Temple at Jerusalem, and spent twelve years under the training of the pious women who taught

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and served there. She was thus a member of a group of maidens who, it is said, were celebrated all over the Orient for the flax and wool which they spun and wove into remarkable fabrics; for the beauty of the embroidery and needlework with which they ornamented the hangings and curtains of the temple; for rugs and carpets of priceless value which they made; and for especially the tapestries which they wove out of fine linens, silks, and gold and silver fabrics. It is said that the seamless garment which was found upon the body of Jesus at his crucifixion, which the Roman soldiers shrank from tearing and dividing, but for the possession of which they gambled, was made by Mary and was a product of the skill she acquired in the training of the temple. The lily is still held as her emblem because of her lily-work upon the linens of the temple and the veil of the Holy of Holies, the embroidery of which was her peculiar task.

Harriet Prescott Spofford has used these traditions out of which to weave a beautiful poem in which she makes the Angel of the Annunciation to find Mary at her peculiar temple task, "spinning in the sun," and dreaming of that Coming One whom the temple and even "The heaven of heavens could not contain."

MOTHER EQUIPMENT

“Though seven of the tender maids
Of Nazareth cast lots to see
Who might be sped and set apart

(Sing, *Blue and purple and scarlet
And fine-twined linen thread.*)

To spin the smooth skein that should be
The Temple curtain, and should stir
To gust of frankincense and myrrh,
The happy fortune fell on her.

(Sing, *Precious was the ointment
Spilled on the high-priest's head.*)

“And as she sat and twirled her thread,
And sang, perchance, beneath her breath
Some sacred song of sweet content,

(Sing, *Out of ivory palaces
Hath music made thee glad.*)

Only a maid of Nazareth
She held herself within her thought,
Whose good-hap to the Temple brought
The royal purple that she wrought.

(Sing, *With the wings of cherubim
The mercy-seat was clad.*)

“And in such simple honor glad,
Serene in service moved the maid,
And dreamed not if more honor were;

(Sing, *Thou art fair, oh thou art fair!
Thou hast the eyes of a dove!*)

Dreamed some time, spinning in the shade,
That the King said the house in vain
Would that high Presence hold which fain
The heaven of heavens could not contain;

(Sing, *The covering of purple,
The midst being paved with love.*)

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“When suddenly what glorious stain
Dyed all the shadow of the room,
When the great angel stooped and brought

(Sing, *Wondrous were the almond flowers
Blossomed on Aaron's rod!*)

All heaven in with him to the gloom,
Crying, Hail, highly favored, now
The sun, the stars, before thee bow,
The Lord is with thee, blessed thou!

(Sing, *Yea, upon the harp will I
Praise Thee, O God, my God!*)”

It was the office of these maidens to keep immaculate the sacred vessels used in the sacrifices and rites of the Temple, to care for and even make the vestments of the officiating priests, and to keep in order and condition the hanging and drapings of the altar. They were trained to chant in the choruses and antiphonal choirs and to participate in the responses of ritualistic parts of the worship. These virgins were there carefully instructed in a knowledge of Hebrew history and Scriptures, the traditions of their race, and were trained in personal habits of piety and devotion and incited to deeds of charity and mercy. This makes perfectly natural the influences which Mary must have exerted upon the development of Jesus, and disposes of much of the strain that has been placed on efforts to provide miraculous sources of his genius.

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She was herself a trained and facile instrument in the hand of God for the equipment and training of Jesus. From her he unquestionably inherited the spiritual appetencies which so marked him and which were avenues, all ready wide open into his being, for the coming of and use of the Spirit of God; and she it must have been who with deft hand awakened and trained them. In this especially she becomes a model for mothers everywhere. It is now generally admitted by students of human society that religious training is a necessary part of the education of youth. It was insisted by our first President, George Washington: "If we would preserve our liberty as a nation we must educate our young people religiously." Far-seeing statesmen and patriots have reaffirmed his position ever since. Theodore Roosevelt said: "People educated in intellect and not educated in morals and religion will become a menace to our nation." But it is also being seen that neither church nor school nor any institution can take the place of the mother in this delicate and important work. We are bound to admire the success of the Roman Catholic Church in this field, but we have not discerned that the source of it all is found in the attention they give to mothers. One of the

points of insistent reiteration with them is the duty, the paramount duty, the overwhelming obligation of a mother to train and drill the child into a respect for the church and ecclesiastical authorities, and for the Scriptures as they interpret them. Their whole efficient system of religious training would be worthless without the participation of the mother in laying the foundation in the home which the church so shrewdly uses and builds upon.

The suggestion humorously made a few years ago that we needed a school for parents is now being taken quite seriously, and provisions are being made and constantly improved to instruct and even train mothers in the care of their children. It is perhaps true that at present the emphasis is placed upon the temporalities—food, health, and the care of the body; but the thought of the moral and spiritual necessities of childhood, and the mother as the only efficient agent for meeting them, is increasingly asserting itself. How general it shall become or what directions it may finally take in providing courses for study and reading, and for practical intensive training, we cannot predict. But this seems certain: *if the church is to save and preserve the child to its faith and to religious service, it must give increasing attention to mother-*

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hood; it can do nothing worth while without its cooperation.

Now, it would seem that in finding a mother for Jesus this was understood and attended to. Mary was evidently steeped in the spirit of devotion and religion and able to stimulate and give direction to the spiritual faculties of her boy. The *Magnificat* is really a beautiful verbal tapestry made out of many passages from the prophetic writings and psalmody of her people and so deftly woven into her hymn that they reveal her wide and intimate knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures. Dr. George Elliott in his *Christmas Canticles* says: "The *Magnificat* links the old dispensation and the new; it is an interlude between the Law and the Gospel. It is the swan song of Hebraism and an overture for Christianity. It finds its basic material in the hymn that Hannah sang after the birth of her son Samuel. But a new spirit inspires this canticle. There is a legend that Mary found a flower without perfume in the garden at Hebron and, having touched it, that flower has been filled with fragrance ever since. So she took the triumphant ode of a proud woman of the past and filled it with the sweetness of her gentler spirit."¹

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Is it too much to say that in Jesus, Mary found "the rose of Sharon" and "the lily of the valleys" of which Solomon sang? "A root out of dry ground" the prophet Isaiah had called him, but a plant of such inherent beauty and latent fragrance that to its growth and development his mother abandoned herself with the strange joy that pulsates in and explains her song.

To the intentness of his mother the finely organized being of Jesus must have responded as an instrument reacts to its master and she played her part in his equipment for his unique task in a way that makes her achievement an incentive to all mothers.

One incident which is eloquent of the influence upon Jesus of the training which Mary had herself experienced, is related by Luke (4. 16). Jesus had been absent in Capernaum for a year and had returned home. The record reads: "And he came to Nazareth where he had been brought up; and as his custom was he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day." How revealing are the words, "As his custom was!" She who was so thoroughly devoted to the services of the temple, who made every year at least one considerable journey to be present at its Passover celebration, would inevitably impress her boy with its

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delights and privileges. And, undoubtedly, this devotion would extend to the services of the synagogue in Nazareth, where they lived. So that, added to the piety and home instruction of his mother, would be such provisions and advantages as the local synagogue provided for his training in their Scriptures and worship.

It requires no stress of the imagination to see Jesus through all those impressionable years of his boyhood, the years of highest spiritual expectancy and receptiveness, wending his way to the services in the little synagogue, until his life became steeped in the spirit of religious devotion, and the church of his day would have become inseparably a very part of his existence. Unquestionably, those psychic organs of the soul which lie dormant and latent in some embryonic state in every child, awaiting development and training just as do the physical faculties, were nourished into activity along with and as naturally as the rest of his being.

It is strange that we think of the soul-faculties of a child as a part of its nature that God will look after, if it is cared for at all, and something so bordering on the supernatural that we should not touch it with our blundering hands. But parents' hands must

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not, need not, blunder at this the most delicate but important service they may render childhood. Mary stands forever the example of what a loving and trained mother may accomplish in giving direction to the spiritual development of her child. The supernatural offices have been performed already, in placing into her hands the psychic organs and impulses of a human being, and it is a parent's high duty, and ought to be the keenest delight to discover, strengthen, and direct these activities so that they will not only produce a healthy soul but will make the correspondences and attachments by which the lives of our children shall be able to enter into a new and upper range of life with its own peculiar adventures, attainments, and pleasures. What a joy it is, for instance, to a really intelligent mother to lead or direct her child into the mysteries and delights of literature, art or music, and to furnish it with a developed set of correspondences by which these worlds of pleasure are open to it; by which it becomes an initiate and member of kingdoms that lie beyond the ken and range of the merely physical being! But how immeasurably finer it is to awaken the spiritual appetencies and attachments that impinge on God and Truth and the whole world of moral and spiritual forces

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and delights! What a serious responsibility it is to accept the guardianship of a human soul with its rights in, and its equipment for, a heavenly kingdom and allow those rights to lapse unclaimed, and the equipment to waste and wither through neglect and disuse! What a terrible thing it is to allow a child to become as truly a deficient, through neglect of the soul, as if it were blind, or dumb, or a cripple! It must have been with the keenest sorrow that Jesus said of the insensate multitudes of his day, "Eyes to see have they, but they see not!" That entire range of existence to which he could escape, over which he could roam at will, experiencing its power and tasting its delights and refreshments, because he had been placed *en rapport* with it by a careful mother; that world whose ministrations left him strong amid human weakness, confident and controlled amid panic-driven multitudes, and supremely content amid the harried, hurried, and worried worldlings of his day; that world more real to him than the real estate which underlay the world's business—that world was all undisclosed to them because they could not even see it.

Eugene Field one night heard his little child at its mother's knee, offering the good-night prayer. He wrote:

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“As the shadows round me creep,
A childish treble breaks the gloom,
And softly from the farther room
Comes, ‘Now I lay me down to sleep.’

“And somehow with that little prayer,
And that sweet treble in my ears,
My thoughts go back to distant years,
And linger with the loved ones there.
And as I hear my child’s ‘Amen,’
My mother’s faith comes back to me,
Crouched at her side I seem to be,
And mother holds my hands again.”¹

Where must the failure be located if children are allowed to grow up within the range of this world and remain unconscious of or irresponsible to it? Not against the church can we place this blame unless it has been careless in pointing motherhood to its most imperative duty and its highest privilege. And so Jesus, when a man, returning from preaching the gospel of the Kingdom, came into the homely little synagogue, beside the “Main Street” of a homely little town, and worshiped with the common homely people with whom he had worshiped all his days, *because it was “his custom.”*

There is another essential quality in his life

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that suggests to our imagination the long hours of patient and faithful service which Mary must have given to her boy: That is, her own spirit of obedience as revealed in his respect for parental authority; and this, in spite of modern tendencies, must still be counted a vital element in character construction and child culture.

On reaching his twelfth year every Hebrew boy was presumed to have emerged from childhood and was by their law declared to be, in a sense, "of age." In some degree he passed from the guardianship of his parents and was admitted to the privileges and responsibilities of a matured member of his community. Among these was the obligation to participate in the rites and ceremonies of its religion. It becomes apparent then that the twelfth pilgrimage of Mary and Joseph to Jerusalem to celebrate the festival of the Pasch was of very deep significance. The ceremonies in which Jesus for the first time took part with Joseph must have made a deep impression upon his sensitive soul and the incident so barely recorded goes far to explain the fact that he was finally found, oblivious to the anxiety of his parents, "in the temple sitting in the midst of the doctors hearing them and asking them questions." Dr. George Elliott says: "We

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can hear his boyish voice joining in the Pilgrim Psalms: 'I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, whence cometh my help'; 'I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go unto the house of Jehovah'; 'My soul waiteth for



Hofmann

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the Lord'; up to that final chorus when, standing in the Temple courts, they chanted, 'Behold, bless ye Jehovah, all ye servants of Jehovah,' and the white robed priests intoned

the answering benediction, 'Jehovah, that made heaven and earth, bless thee out of Zion.' As he listened to the antiphonal chanting of the Temple choirs, did he not recall the *Magnificat*, the *Benedictus*, the *Gloria in Excelsis*, and the *Nunc Dimittis*, of which his mother had doubtless told him, and find in them a transition from the psalmody of the Old Testament to the newborn minstrelsy of his New-Testament church? How his heart throbbed with an awful gladness at this vision of the city of David, the throne of Solomon, the fortress of the Maccabees, soon to become

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the scene of his own suffering and the site of his sepulcher.”¹

The ceremonies were probably preceded by some sort of celebration of his twelfth year and his assumption of important religious and civic duties and must have deeply stirred his receptive being. The whole event played with tremendous influence upon his awakened æsthetic and psychic natures and released the latent and slumbering forces which centuries of preparation had stored up in his soul. We are able to understand how, to her gentle chiding of him that he should have lost himself to them, he earnestly and impetuously—but not impudently—replied to his mother, “Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?” But what *is hard to understand* is that his aroused nature should have so easily given way and made possible the record of Luke: “He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them.” Those eighteen years of subjection of his expanding life and soul to the authority, the duties, and the law of that simple Galilæan home can be understood only in the light of those years of obedience to the loving rule and authority of his parents. Are we able to say in the light

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of modern tendencies and the emphasis placed upon an unprecedented freedom of youth that Mary was wrong? That the beautiful virtue of filial devotion which she must have inspired in Jesus was a mistake? Is he not in this surrender of himself to that home and its compulsions the example of youth in this, as in other qualities of good character? It is helpful to read the gospel record along with the Epistles in which Paul lays special emphasis on the fact that Jesus "learned obedience." Thus, "he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Where did he learn that obedience that has stood us in such good stead? Was it not in the home at Nazareth? We are bound still to believe that in this particular too Mary played the part of an ideal mother.

CHAPTER VI

MOTHER EQUIPMENT

(CONTINUED)

THE modern mother frequently needs to realize that the altar which sanctifies the utmost gifts of education, training, and culture is in the nursery. A college president was once talking to a woman about the education of her two daughters. To his recommendation of higher education where possible for women, the mother replied: "We shall not send them to college. I am sure they will never have to earn their own living." She revealed a not uncommon idea that education is not to fit one for living, but only for making a living. She was especially oblivious to the necessity for the highest possible training for women. A university education will not necessarily make a good mother, but it is a terrible mistake to think that a good mother cannot use in the offices of motherhood all the gifts our civilization can bestow upon her.

Someone commenting upon some of our

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modern educational tendencies, said that it was a mighty good thing that the education of Abraham Lincoln was left to Nancy Hanks and God. We are bound to admit that no social machinery can take the place of the world-old instincts of true motherhood as exhibited in Nancy Hanks. But modern life is demanding so much of mothers, and their task has become so intricate, that this instinct itself calls for every assistance which education and the knowledge of our day afford. Even in his time that great statesman, John Quincy Adams, felt the necessity of assisting inefficient motherhood, and he is on record as saying: "It is the duty of a government to do all in its power to promote the present and future prosperity of the nation over which it is placed. This prosperity will depend on the character of the citizens. The characters of these will be formed by their *mothers*; and it is through the mothers that the government can control the characters of its future citizens, to form them such as will insure their country's prosperity. If this is the case, then it is the duty of our present Legislature to begin now to form the characters of our next generation by controlling that of the females, who are to be these mothers, while it is yet with them a season of improvement."

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Many women estimate that education is to enable them to earn a salary; to work in woman's clubs or participate in civic or political affairs, seeming not to realize that in all the world there is no task which so demands the highest reaches of intellectual development and spiritual vision as that of motherhood. Any woman who envisions the all-round work of child-culture will recognize that in it she has a profession which demands a more symmetrical training and development of her own powers and gifts than any other work of life. The reason that some mothers find their task tiresome and uninteresting is not because they are mothers; it is because they are not mothers enough to comprehend the marvel and sweep of their mission.

Some time ago a woman came to a prominent judge and asked him to assist her in writing a paper for her club upon the subject, "How Can a Woman Uplift the Coming Generation?" The judge in his reply pronounced an eloquent eulogy upon his own mother: "I think that my mother influenced the next generation more profoundly than any other human being I have ever known." The lady listened patiently and murmured, "No doubt she was a woman of very strong mind."

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"No," said the Judge, smiling, "she got her hold upon us in very simple ways. She was a plump little woman with merry blue eyes, and I remember that when we came home from school on very cold days she had given up every other task and was waiting for us beside the log fire. Off would come our wet shoes and stockings and with her own hands she would rub our cold feet warm. There was always a huge brown jug waiting before the fire with roasted apples and sugar and hot water in it and each had his mug of the delicious stuff. And while we sat and drank and grew warm and laughed and joked we opened up our little hearts to the dear, wise woman. She was our comrade. She had no more imperative duty than to be with us when necessary. When we grew to be men we continued to carry all our secrets and troubles to her. There were two ministers and two legislators of us, but I doubt if one of us ever took an important step in life without seeking the opinion of this good woman." The questioner looked at her notes on the world's great reformers, statesmen, and social workers and said, rather hesitatingly, "Then you think that woman's strongest hold upon the world is at home through love and a Christian life?" The judge's kindly eyes

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twinkled as he replied: "I can only tell you what I know. I cannot decide for the world." But had he not fully answered her?

That old jibe at the dreams and ambitions of mothers, in which every cradle holds a possible president, is truer to fact than we think. Need mothers place their imagination in leash as they dream about the potentialities lying under their hands? Dare any one say what a baby may not become? She is a wise woman who realizes that the highest possible equipment has the highest possible service and usefulness in ministering to a child. Such mothers as those of Jesus, of Scott and Ruskin, of Lincoln and the world's best men have done a work more delicate and beautiful, more intricate and divine than any artist of earth, for they exercised their artistry upon the most priceless stuff in the universe as far as we know it.

A very earnest Christian mother was persuaded to tell a group of women at a mothers' meeting to what she ascribed her success in rearing her children. She has trained four, three boys and a girl, in such a way that they were not youthful anarchists and public nuisances; the love they found at home was not that variety which made them hated and dreaded everywhere else; and they lived

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natural, robust, and happy lives because people liked them and helped them to have a good time. All that she tried to say in her brief talk was covered by and condensed into a set of resolutions she had drawn up for herself, which she read every morning, and which the meeting thought so excellent that their publication was requested. Here they are:

“Resolved, That the first duty of the day performed by me shall be prayer to God, especially for strength and wisdom to properly instruct, guide, and govern my child.

“Resolved, That I will never permit my child to willfully disobey me or treat me with disrespect.

“Resolved, That I will earnestly strive never to act under an impulse of passion or resentment, but will endeavor to preserve my judgment cool and my feelings calm, that I may clearly see and truly perform my duty to my child.

“Resolved, That I will devote a certain portion of my time each day to self-instruct my child.

“Resolved, That I will watch over my own temper at all times, cultivate a habit of cheerfulness and interest myself in the little matters of my child, that I may thereby gain his love.

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“Resolved, That I will devote my time especially to those pursuits which will increase the comfort and happiness of my home and forward the best interest of my child.

“Resolved, That I will study the health of my child, reading on the subject and asking advice of those who are more experienced than myself.

“Resolved, That I will not yield to discouragements from failure, but will persevere, putting faith in the promise of God to all those who earnestly and faithfully strive to do their duty.”

This little mother was so unpretentious too that all unconsciously she commended the grace of humility as one of the elements of her success and of a strong motherhood. So, we are persuaded, it was with Mary. The glad abandon of her exaltation is beautifully softened by her humility. She was herself “the handmaiden of the Lord,” the literal meaning of which is, “the slave-maiden of the Lord.” Her ability was touched by a sense of the sacredness of her task and her own unworthiness in its presence. And so to some extent it must be with every worthy mother. The feeling of her own inadequacy is, after all, the finest evidence of her fitness; and this will become in her an urge to seek the

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divine guidance and power which mothers surely need. There is a poem by Curtis May on "Tucking Baby In," the last stanza of which beautifully expresses this thought:

"The dark-fringed eyelids slowly close
On eyes serene and deep;
Upon my breast my own sweet child
Has gently dropped to sleep;
I kiss his soft and dimpled cheek,
I kiss his rounded chin,
Then lay him in his little bed,
And tuck my baby in.

"How fair and innocent he lies,
Like some small angel strayed,
His face still warmed by God's own smile,
That slumbers unafraid!
Or like some new embodied soul,
Still pure from taint of sin—
My thoughts are reverent as I stoop
To tuck my baby in.

"What toil must stain these tiny hands
That now lie still and white?
What shadows creep across the face,
That shines with morning light?
These wee pink shoeless feet—how far
Shall go their lengthening tread,
When they no longer cuddled close
May rest upon this bed?

"Oh, what am I that I should train
An angel for the skies;
Or mix the potent draught that feeds
The soul within these eyes?

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I reach him to the sinless hands
Before his cares begin—
Great Father, with thy folds of love,
O tuck my baby in.”¹

It requires, however, that the modern mother study her task from the angle of to-day's necessities. The world perhaps used to feel that in some vague, almost miraculous way, mothers found in their very motherhood the necessary equipment. But to-day it is realized that “maternal instinct” and “mother love” may come to be mere platitudes, and that neither of them may be adequate without thought and training. The old-time mother wonderfully succeeded with quite primitive facilities because the times were primitive. To-day, however, the whole range of social relations has become so intricate and important that all of them require study; this is especially true in the sphere of motherhood.

At a recent dinner a progressive woman was making an address upon the importance of training for motherhood when one of her auditors said, impatiently, to a neighbor: “My mother raised seven children without the help of any book or half-baked school-teacher. I'm against all these fads in raising girls. You

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don't have to tell born mothers what to do." But not all women, or even all mothers, are what was meant by the term "born mothers." Two women in an altercation about their children were reflecting upon each other as mothers and one of them screamed, "Why, I've already buried more children than she's ever had." Our thought of motherhood must carry further than the mere ability to beget children; it must involve the power to mature them and to mature in them the graces and traits of highest manhood and womanhood.

By the grace of God almost anyone can raise a baby as a human animal. But when you think of that exquisitely delicate piece of soul-and-body mechanism intrusted to a woman—her newborn babe—you are bound to confess that if any task of earth asks for care and training, that task *is hers*. And as you watch her assume the responsibility, you instinctively say, "Let us pray." We do not have born stenographers, born artists, or born business men. What we mean by the term is, an inherited instinctive appetency which, however, must be trained and directed to come to its highest efficiency. Motherhood is a wonderful power for good. It glorifies the home, it makes the endless sacrifice of the mother a real sacrament, but it cannot work

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miracles, and in the face of our modern conditions, without study or preparation, may be woefully inadequate.

The task of the old-fashioned mother was greatly influenced by the struggle with comparative hardship. The great problems of her life were largely temporal and concerned mainly with food, clothing, and opportunity for schooling.

But the modern mother is tried by a different set of circumstances. These temporalities are matters of course in the average American home. And yet the mother is apt to feel that her task is largely performed when these are provided.

But the fact is that a child is more apt to survive as a good citizen, from the hardships of the olden time than the affluence and plenty of to-day. *The home of poverty is not falling down to-day as is the home of wealth.* One does not like to credit the figures furnished a short time ago by the New York Association for the Improvement of the Poor, and yet we are persuaded that they are substantially true: Eleven per cent of abandoned children die under the age of two. Thirteen per cent of *all* the children of the city die under that age, which led the general agent of the Association to say, "A foundling

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to-day in charge of the general committee is a better insurance risk than a child having the care of its own mother." American parents of to-day are in danger of estimating that love for their children is best expressed by lavishing upon them the things which they had to do without.

"Mary," said an energetic housewife to her washerwoman, "your Annie graduated from grammar school this year—didn't she? What is she working at?"

"I'm making a lady of her," replied Mary, proudly. "She'll never have to be told to put in more bluing and to be careful about the insertion. I'm having her learn china painting and embroidery!"

It seems almost petty to challenge this tender weakness, born of love and kindness, but the call of motherhood is a call for such stern unselfishness as comes to none others and its severest test is the demand that in shaping the future life she shall control her maternal instincts to the child's good. Her children are so sweet and bewitching even in moments of willful disobedience that her softness is apt to divert her view from the far-ahead goal; to excuse serious shortcomings, and to even encourage them when they are "real cute."

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Mothers little realize how almost insensibly but potently their attitude to questions of principle and conduct affects the lives of their children and determines in their very early years their future code of honor. It is related that early in our American history a visitor from one of the European courts, looking upon the stern outlines of a New England landscape, asked, "What can you raise on these hills?" The reply was apt: "We raise men." If we are to continue to "raise men," something like the granite of those hills which worked into grit in the character of our forefathers, something from the hard, stern aspect of their frugal, straitened lives, must persist as an element in the characters of their descendants.

It seems shameful to put the responsibility for this so largely on American mothers and release, as we are too apt to do, the fathers from their share of it. But from time immemorial, society, the home and even our very nature, seems to have been organized to largely place the influences that create character in the hands of our mothers. Napoleon, attributing his elevation to his mother, laid it down as a maxim, "that the future good or bad conduct of a child depends entirely on the mother." It doesn't always seem fair. But

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somewhere the responsibility must rest, and until we are able to make a better adjustment of the whole problem, safety requires that it remain in the hands of those best able to take care of it. And the emergent call to modern motherhood is that they shall not surrender to the softness and laxity of our age but shall remain true to the spirit of Mary and all the great mothers who have given to the race great sons.

Talking about this very thing one man said to another one day: "The memory of my father is a sacred influence to me, but the finest act and the one most affecting my character was my mother's. I remember that we children had come in hungry and she got out the last loaf of bread in the house for us. As she cut it up she began to cry. She kept none for herself and we devoured it all, wondering all the time. After we had eaten she told us about it. Father had refused to do a mean and shabby thing for his employer and had been given three days to think it over. He still refused and was discharged. But that day with only one loaf of bread in the house he had said to her: 'Mother, I can't stand it to see the children hungry and I fear they are coming to it before I get work again. I am going to yield and ask for my old position.'

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‘And, children, I’m to blame for your hunger. I told him I would rather see you hungry than the children of a dishonored man.’ Through all the years of my life the figure of my mother that day has upheld me in times of doubt and temptation. I have always felt that there were worse things than hunger.”

This figure of their mother outstanding in the memories of men as the index finger of duty and destiny is a common one through all the history of our race. May God grant that she may continue to stand thus in our modern day, in worthy companionship with Mary the Mother.



MATER DOLOROSA
Corsini Gal.

Guido Reni

CHAPTER VII

MOTHER RENUNCIATION

THE BRAVEST BATTLE

"The bravest battle that was ever fought,
Shall I tell you where and when?
On the maps of the world you will find it not,
'Twas fought by the mothers of men.

"Nay, not with cannon, or battle-shot,
With sword, or nobler pen;
Nay, not with eloquent word or thought,
From mouths of wonderful men.

"But deep in a welled-up woman's heart,
Of woman that would not yield,
But bravely, silently bore her part,
Lo! there is that battlefield!

"No marshaling troop, no bivouac song;
No banners to gleam and wave!
But O! these battles they last so long—
From babyhood to the grave!

"Yet faithful still as a bridge of stars,
She fights in her walled-up town—
Fights on, and on, in the endless wars,
Then silent, unseen, goes down!

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"O! ye with banners and battle-shot,
And soldier to shout and praise,
I tell you the kingliest victories fought
Are fought in these silent ways!"¹

—*Joaquin Miller.*

ANOTHER thing which Mary did for her boy was to make the sacrifices which no one but a true mother would see and no one but an unusual mother would offer. Perhaps we all have been impressed from the Scripture narrative with some sense of disappointment in Mary. Did she understand her son and had she any comprehension of his mission? Was she not rather dull and common and prosaic? Was she capable of appreciating that lofty idealism which so possessed him and which was so clearly the genius of Jesus?

We believe that the Messianic consciousness and the conviction that he was to become the world-sacrifice were not instantaneous revelations to him, but had a slow dawning which did not break into full-orbed day until his public ministry began or was under way. And there are indubitable evidences that up to the very last moments of his earthly life there were experiences which he accepted as

¹ Permission to print granted by Harr Wagner Publishing Co., publisher of Joaquin Miller's *Complete Poems*.

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a part of his mission, but did not understand. Still less could we expect his mother to have comprehended all that tragedy which the world after nineteen centuries of scrutiny has not yet fathomed. There was a crescendo in his spiritual exaltations that continued to rise until our last view of him. But it was not so with Mary. In a high mood of exultant faith her reply to Elisabeth, reminding us of a song-bird whose throat pulses rapturously and whose heart seems like to break with its ecstasy, rises on the wings of lofty song:

“My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour, For he has regarded the low estate of his hand-maiden: For, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things.”

But do we not later sense a diminuendo from this elevated note of her Expectancy until its pianissimo dies away into a silence that has left us listening, wondering, and disappointed?

George Matheson has given a view of Mary which for many of us has cleared up some of this confusion and reconciles in a way the inconsistency between the lofty attitude of her acceptance of her task and the record—or lack of it—of the after years. According

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to him, she deliberately accepted, as a continuation of her mission, the ulterior task of becoming the guardian of the physical life and bodily health of Jesus. It is a tradition worthy of note, if not of credence, that Jesus and his mother had a perfect understanding by which their relations were sustained as the Scripture records; that Mary insisted on taking no part nor place in his public life and that her sense of humility was so keen that in very kindness, if there were no profounder reasons, he was obliged to yield to her. Kindergartners have an expression, "spiritual and physical mothers." Of course the good mother will be both, for only as she catches sight of the higher offices of her task is a mother inspired and equipped to perform well the drudgery so often associated with motherhood. But the expression recognizes a distinction that we must admit too often exists.

This problem of Mary's is often enough met in our own modern homes to enable us to understand it. Here is a young, expanding life. Aspiration has taken complete possession of it. Dreams and visions have waited upon it, working that fine frenzy of soul and mental exhilaration, that spiritual exaltation, in which the normal physical life seems sometimes to be an embarrassment and even a

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clog. When Belerophon mounted the divine steed Pegasus, his aspiration, despising and ignoring the limitations of the mortal, leaped to attempt a flight to the sun, which Zeus must interrupt with the death of the adventurous youth. So it has been through all history and still is and ever shall be with young men.

Now, it is ideal, perhaps we would say, for his mother to be the constant associate of that young life as it begins to climb the heights of knowledge, to fan its aspirations and stimulate its energies; to be the Pallas-Athene whose fine whip and spur of love and ambition urge him on. There was once a mother who resented so bitterly her inability to play this part that she was almost insanely jealous of her boy's teachers, who touching his life in what she considered its higher reaches, entered with him upon the paths she could not tread. But it is so much the office of motherhood to sacrifice that we can hear the good mother say to her perturbed soul: "Here! you must be content to remain behind and take care of some of the important interests he is going to neglect and which must be looked after if he ever realizes his dreams." And so she interests herself in his food, in the way he eats it, in his rest and recreations and

in his cultivation of correct habits. No one is so intensely interested in his tasks, his dreams and ambitions as she, but it must be her task to care for his bodily powers. And perhaps *her most exquisite suffering* is to realize that he thinks meanly of the emphasis she makes. May it not have been so with Mary?

History records that some great souls and very fine brains have functioned in some weak and deficient bodies. There is not wanting, indeed, a pseudo-philosophy which holds that great spiritual exaltations are attained only by a rigorous denial of the bodily needs; that as the spiritual man waxes mighty the physical must wane. But we are not prepared to believe, in spite of much testimony, that the ascetic represents the highest type of spiritual humanity; that a weak and impoverished body supplies the needed vehicle for a mighty soul; or that the spiritual ideals which must actuate the final civilization and give us at last the superman, are created in the brain and soul of a physical weakling. It is, of course, true that in the cultivation of spirit there must be denial of the animal passions and a control of all the bodily powers into an obedient service of the soul. Paul points the way to human perfection: "I keep my body

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under”; and in his letter to the Corinthians he expresses the attitude of Christianity to the human body: “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple is holy, which temple ye are.” But he glorifies the body *as a servant* of the higher powers. “Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you? . . . Therefore glorify God in your body, and in your Spirit, which are God’s” (1 Cor. 6. 19, 20).

Jesus said that if a limb of the body in its service of the soul offend or hinder, it must be cut off; if the eye wanders from its guardianship it must be plucked out, for he held that the interests of the soul were to be supreme. But he did not teach that the body should be despised or neglected. It is of priceless value and dignity, for it is the only tabernacle for an expanding soul; the only chrysalides in which is incubated the eternal life. It is to be developed and strengthened to its utmost, but kept under constant control. An American professor speaking before the International Eugenics Congress, in London, is reported to have said that had he been permitted to choose his father, he would have

selected a "robust burglar in preference to a consumptive bishop." His epigram raised a great laugh in the world. But it needs to be seriously viewed since it strikingly and faithfully presents the two types of manliness toward which our educational processes have tended neither of which is necessary nor desirable.

One of the problems before our civilization and one that must be solved before we can evolve much farther is how to grow the soul of a saint within the body of an athlete. We probably shall never excel the perfection of the Greek body. The way of eugenics and breeding seems not to be along that line. In fact, the endeavor to achieve it seems to suffer a reaction in which nature grimly turns us back to begin over again. The program of the trained athlete seldom commends itself for length of days or life-efficiency, and the attainment of prowess in his given specialty costs so tremendously in other things worth while that the emphasis seems a mistake. The ideal for a human life has been lifted.

The final end of physical culture and of our athletic programs must be something higher than even a perfect Apollo-like body; their goal must be a symmetrically developed physical organism whose fine strength and rugged

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endurance shall assist in the development of the soul. The three qualifications considered in assigning the greatly coveted Rhodes scholarships must commend themselves to all who rightly estimate the value and place in education of athletic training: The first place is given to qualities of manhood, character, and leadership, the second to scholastic and literary abilities and attainments, and the third to physical development. This is an emphasis and discrimination correctly placed and which must be insisted on in the education of the coming manhood.

Jesus was no weakling. Hofmann has caught him for a picture when he is driving the money-changers from the temple, in an



Hofmann

CASTING OUT THE MONEY-CHANGERS

attitude of great bodily vigor and power which the Gospels make perfectly consistent. There

is no hint that he ever had a day of illness. His visions for humanity were not the feverish dreams of disordered bodily functions. We believe that one of the conditions upon which the "due time" of his coming waited was the appearance of a woman who should give him the goodly inheritance of a perfected physical organism. Not through any hastily or carelessly chosen origin could Jesus have been born into the world and equipped for his task. There is every evidence that he came into life as splendidly endowed for his great mission as the selective processes of the long centuries could achieve.

A study of his career makes this plain: He was born in a stable, a mere shelter for animals. Turned away from human habitations, he is forced to begin his earthly existence in the lodgings of the ox and ass, which with the heat of their bodies and their warm breath seek to compensate for the fire needed on a midwinter night. Under these conditions even the loving embrace of Mother Mary could scarcely have protected him against inconceivable exposure. His cradle was a manger and his first bed the coarse, damp straw that came from an Eastern threshing floor. In the Stygian darkness of this cave-stable, relieved only by the feeble rays of light from Joseph's

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rude lantern, he who was "to lighten them that sit in darkness" came into a world of which he was to be the spiritual luminary. But his mother had given him from her own splendid body powers that enabled him to survive this first terrible ordeal.

After the operation of circumcision, Joseph and Mary, when he is but forty days old, journey with him to Jerusalem for the ceremonial of presentation in the temple, after which they return with him to Bethlehem.

While he is but a tender infant the angel messenger warns them of the plans of Herod to take his life and di-



Huat

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

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rects them to flee into Egypt. It was a long, hard journey of one hundred and forty miles over primitive roads and through trackless deserts. We must reject the stories with which tradition has relieved the hardships of that hurried flight by miraculous interventions and celestial ministrations, and must believe that its rigors were hard for the parents and especially severe upon the little babe. And in Egypt after their arrival there they were foreigners and forced to live the hard life of fugitives and aliens. Tradition informs us that Mary was compelled to exercise her skill in weaving and embroidery to assist in securing a precarious living. He was still an infant in arms when again came the messenger saying, "Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel."

At last, after what must have been a dreadful experience for both mother and babe, they are homeward bound for Bethlehem. But again they are warned aside for fear of his enemies and are fain content to turn into Galilee, where they finally settle at Nazareth. Pretty rough going for a baby we might say—certainly, experiences for her little one that would appall a modern woman. How eagerly, if it could, would Christian affection lift the

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veil of silence that hides those years for one satisfying peep into the early days of Jesus and those tumultuous terrifying days of his mother. But the glimpse we do get makes us content to leave him with the heavenly Father and his earthly mother, who, it seems, was perfectly adequate for her task, for the record states: "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him." "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man." Evidently, none of these harsh experiences of his infancy and boyhood seemed to vitiate in any way his original strength or hinder his developing powers.

It is indubitable that the body of Jesus was an essential factor in the Plan of Redemption. The Scripture statement of his growth, "And Jesus increased in



Hofmann

HEAD OF CHRIST

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wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man," reveals a symmetrical development, a normal education of his whole being—physical, mental, spiritual, and social. It must have been then, that as perception, imagination, memory, and his psychical powers aroused, the body with its intricate and delicate nervous organism kept up with the progress in harmonious and sympathetic co-ordination as perfect as human conditions allow.

It would require, then, first of all, that his bodily powers be brought into obedience to the law of his being, even as the athlete at the training table subjects himself, his appetites, and his desires to the supreme demands of the game he plays. *And this is the very achievement that so stands out and is emphasized in the life of Jesus.* It may have been with something of the impatience of youth that he said to his mother at twelve years of age, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" But that business involved nothing higher for the time being than to return with her to the little town of Nazareth and become "subject" to his parents. While in this he undoubtedly yielded to her tender compulsions, there was probably some measure of comprehension of its wisdom, else

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the process would not have secured such beautiful response from him as he evidently gave to it.

In the isolation of Nazareth—where his chief companionships were his mother, who represented a law to which he did loving obedience, and “the infinite secret which was curbed in his heart—was the arena in which for eighteen years he fought for that control of which his brilliant ancestor had said, “He that ruleth his spirit” is greater “than he that taketh a city,” and which is, after all, the essence of manhood. Here as his powers unfolded day by day, as the sublime mystery which wrapped him about intensified, as he laid the hand of imperial will upon curiosity, vanity, impatience, and all the eager but lower impulses of a human being, and repressed them with patience and self-possession, all the time waiting, wondering, preparing; here during those long, dragging eighteen years he underwent the hard task of “learning obedience,” and achieved a part at least of that process by which he became, as Paul said, “perfect through sufferings.”

Here it was that he imposed upon himself that restraint which educates the nervous organism of the body and brings it into subordination to mental and spiritual rulership.

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Here he learned also to create in himself and for himself an atmosphere of calm and serenity in which meditation and brooding and introspection could come to their highest uses in the development of body and soul; and into which he could, as it were, withdraw himself from the distracting influences about him and find needed rest and refreshment. How significant was his understanding of the needs of the disciples as, after they had been sent out to heal and teach, they returned all excited and nervous and he said to them, "Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile." It was the word to them of a Master in the Art of Living.

In the comparative solitude of the little town and its monotonous life we believe that he deliberately lent himself to a program of discipline that included his entire being, physical and spiritual, body and soul. On no other basis can we understand his career and many significant scenes in it. Take, for instance, the temptation in the wilderness.

For forty days he denied himself food and all consolations that might have been rendered by nature in the soothing ministrations of her pleasing moods; for forty days he separated himself from human companionship and associated "with wild beasts." Then he

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was an hungered, and the demands of the body were suddenly thrust forward with a clamor for their usual gratifications. "The physical man was foremost in the scheme of satanic temptation as it was in the Garden of Eden." But his body did not give way. At some earlier period in his life it must have been trained to hold the desire for food subject to the will of the soul. The

subtle suggestion of Satan that he could make bread out of stones did not swerve him. And remembering that this test came just after he had left Nazareth, it seems indubitable that he had entered the contest prepared for its vigils. It must have been



Hofmann

THE TEMPTATION

that the wonderful control of body was acquired by some program of discipline, probably assisted by the poverty in which he up-grew,

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adhered to during those eighteen years. It has been suggested that his teachings show such familiarity with the Eastern philosophies that he must have spent those years in India. But every indication shows that instead, he used them and the isolation, the profound silences that brooded over Nazareth, in which to study himself, his moods, passions and appetites and to place upon his physical and spiritual powers a regimen that would develop to the very highest possibility his powers of resistance. It would seem that at the Jordan he made some manner of connection with what has been called "his Messianic power"; that at his baptism there were experiences with his Father's world and of his Father's power that confirmed and strengthened him for the epoch which it opened up. But it also seems positive that whatever new forces entered his life, they found ready for their use as he went into the wilderness habits of restraint and control that speak their intelligent development.

Viewed in this light how important those eighteen years become. They have been termed "lost years" because we have no history of them. But were they lost? Was not that following period of three years of intense public ministry an eloquent epitome and also a consistent unfolding of them?

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In modern times we would have reversed the periods and given three to preparation and eighteen to fulfillment. But he, wiser than we, gave himself to such rigorous preparation and training that he completed his task in three years and was able to say, "It is finished." Could it have been so finished without those years of subjection? We believe not. As one delightedly watches a piece of intricate machinery do its work, so through the record of those three years we sense the operation of a perfectly coordinating body and mind, working together to meet every possible emergency and test they might bring.

With the poise of an absolutely controlled being, yet there was, when needed, tremendous vigor of action, instant and unerring decision, incisive concentration; and the response of the reserve forces of his nature give a sense of the smoothest kind of operation without ever a hint of over-exertion or illness. The weariness—so rare indeed that it is mentioned—at the well of Sychar, did not prevent his finishing a great work that day. His exaltations, his periods of stress, leave him without moments of reaction or prostration. Calm and undisturbed by its glorification, he descends from his transfiguration to go about the healing of a lunatic child. Men accus-

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tomed to meeting public demands, and the expense of emotion they require, are acquainted with the reactions which succeed an undue strain upon the nerves. Elijah forgot all about Carmel in the depression that followed, in which he ran like a coward from Jezebel. But here is one who met unheard-of situations, on whom unearthly honors and dignities descended, of whom heaven itself said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"; and yet who, so far as can be noted, accepted them all without the acceleration of a heart beat.

Just how far as our Saviour, he was to "take our infirmities and bear our sicknesses" we do not perhaps apprehend, and it is certain that we have not allowed him to be the great Healer he might become to our nervous fretful age. But the perfect discipline to which he subjected all his bodily powers makes him in this, as in all the other qualities that work for complete manhood, our Exemplar. Serenely moving amid conflict and strife, himself untouched by impatience; steadily performing and finishing each day's tasks, but without hurry or worry; constantly the point of attack, the center of debate, the object of contention, yet without evidence of fag of body or brain, he presents an equilibrium that

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is more than robust health; it speaks a perfect interplay between spirit and matter, the ideal coordination of soul and body.

Perhaps this notable attainment has no finer illustration than can be produced by setting in view one day's activities: Early in the morning he was at work. Upon one man who was blind and dumb and had a devil he had performed a threefold miracle of healing. This was too much for his enemies, and, now instead of a mere wine-bibber they call him an ally of Satan, from whom they declare he derived his powers. He told them they were "a generation of vipers," and the rupture between himself and the Pharisees became so serious that Mary and his brothers, fearing for his life, tried to induce him to seek a place of safety. But unafraid and undisturbed, he works on. An afternoon of parables and incisive talks from a boat into which he had been forced by the press of the crowd; into a house where he continued to instruct his disciples, and the evening closed the eventful day. But he said, "Let us pass over to the other side"; so they push out from the shadows along the shore for the lonely hills across the lake. He fell asleep and a storm swept down upon them of such fierceness that the disciples were thoroughly alarmed. Still

he slept on until they aroused him. Instantly he arose and spoke quietness to the tumult on the water and in their hearts.

We cry out at the miracle of his control over nature, but discern not the almost supernatural control of the man over his own nervous system that would allow him after a day of stupendous issues and tremendous labors such as even he had never faced before, to lie down in slumber like an infant, and awaken instantly, in perfect control of himself and those excited fearful men. Like the disciples we cry, "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!" and, like them, *utterly miss the real manner of man he was.*

Jesus gave to the world a new conception of the human body. The Greek had idealized its sensuous beauty and developed it athletically without thought of its spiritual uses; but he not only inspired in Paul, the Christian concept of the body's glorification, but he himself shows us a glorious body in complete subjection to its soul. There have not been wanting through the history of literature people who have told us that the body possesses a latent capacity for sympathetic co-ordination with the soul; there have been many who have advanced philosophies, the-

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ories, and formulas for its attainment; but in Jesus, and he alone, has the marvel of it been actually achieved and historically verified.

It would be a mistake to argue that the sole purpose of this achievement was to enable him to consummate his mission, and at last, after a three-years' vigil which makes the labors of Hercules child's play, faintingly and with broken heart, but triumphantly reach the cross. Great as this would be as a goal and justifying as it would, its inclusion by Providence as a factor in the redemptive scheme, we discern a profounder purpose, an even more momentous end. How far his training and subjection of his body to the spirit, sublimated and refined it into that "spiritual body" with which Paul says he was resurrected; whether this process had to do in any natural way with his recorded feats of levitation, we cannot tell. Nor would we venture to say that a doctrine of spiritual evolution was involved in Paul's words: "That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual." But it *is* clear that in the endless battle with materialism and a consequent animalism, this doctrine of the spiritualization of the human body in this life; this identity of humanity

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with Christ the Son of Mary as well as with an animal ancestry is a tremendous victory. If it could possess our educational ideals and processes and become the end of our physical-culture programs, it would more than any other attainment redeem the world and usher in its Golden Age.

Now, when we estimate the human factors which entered into and made possible this discipline and preparation, we are bound to give chief place to his mother. It is astonishing that Protestantism should have ignored so completely as it has done the ostensible fact of this preparation and *the only probable agency* by which it could have come about. She must have taught him the importance and the use of the wonderful human machine heredity had handed him through her body. Deficient as she must have been in the technical knowledge of physiology which is common to mothers of our day, her religion and her own training would have emphasized that personal attention and care which the human body, like any other piece of mechanism, requires.

Isn't it strange that parents who wouldn't allow a piece of valuable and dangerous machinery to go into the hands of a boy without every possible safeguard of knowledge as

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to its use, will allow as fine and powerful an instrument as the human body to be placed in his care with absolutely no adequate knowledge of how to run or care for it so as to even keep it going, let alone running it for its highest efficiency?

It might be presumed that the instincts, not speaking of any higher promptings, of good mothers would insist that this, the most emergent and imperative demand upon her motherhood, would be cared for. In the case of Mary there was, of course, added compulsion and obligation in the friendly words of the angel, "that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1. 35). She must have constantly lived under the sense of responsibility that would be a ceaseless urge to the highest efforts and the deepest sacrifices. But have we not authority for saying that any expectant mother who listens may hear the message, "That holy thing which shall be born of thee may be called a son of God"? The dearest friend of Jesus, in whose home his mother spent her last days, said, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. . . . Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be."

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Mary must have originated for her Son, and assisted him in the culture of, habits of devotion and worship which not only made attachments for him with divine power and a spiritual world but became the basis of his trust and serenity. She must have taught him that "thoughts are things" in the impact they make on our entire being and that "As a man



Plockhorst

JESUS TAKES LEAVE OF HIS MOTHER

thinketh in his heart so is he." She probably led him in his mental habits away from all futile, fugitive thinking, laying that foundation of concentration that always refused to be diverted by trifles. It is safe to imagine that many times during those eventful eighteen years she must have

soothed and controlled his rising spirit with lessons of patience and control. Some conception of this may have colored the

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thought of Ploekhorst as he portrays Jesus leaving presumably the Galilean home for his public ministry. One senses the tenderness of the farewell and can in imagination hear the loving admonitions of his faithful mother. Someone has said: "The heavenly Father had provided for the divine Christ; someone must provide for the human Jesus." And this was the mission of Mary; it is spelled out in all their recorded relations and breathes through the gospel stories. It was this which hangs her in history, a picture of humiliation and renunciation so complete, of ministration and service so sweet, that we are justified in placing upon her the loftiest earthly title, Mary the Mother.



Fra Angelico

MADONNA DELLA STELLA

MADONNA DELLA STELLA

I cannot always trace the way
Where Thou, Almighty One, dost move;
But I can always, always say,
That God is love.

When fear her chilling mantle throws
O'er earth, my soul to heaven above,
As to its native home, upsprings,
For God is love.

When mystery clouds my darkened path,
I check my dread, my doubt reprove;
In this my soul sweet comfort hath,
That God is love.

Yes, "God is love"—a thought like this
Can every gloomy thought remove,
And turn all tears, all woes to bliss,
For God is love.

—*Anonymous.*

CHAPTER VIII

MOTHER GOD



Murillo

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

IF there be any excuse for Mariolatry, it is found in the instinctive demand of the human heart for a God who shall have in his character the beautiful qualities of mother love. This demand is well-nigh universal. One of the earliest instincts of man was an affection and reverence for a divine

being to whom he imputed the power and quality of motherhood. The primitive races of America personified the earth as a great bountiful mother while worshiping the Great

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Spirit as their father. Among the Finns, Esths, and Lapps the Earth-Mother had a similar place.

The Polynesian mythology placed at the very beginning of things, as creator, a mother-goddess named Vari, who was the author of their earth-mother and all other beings. The Egyptians worshiped one Neith as a mother-goddess to whom they sang in worship: "Glory to thee! Thou art mightier than the gods." The Hindoos revered Aditi, whom they in the same way made the mother of gods and men. The ancient Mexicans erected altars to Soci, "Our Mother," while the Persians conceived of the universe as a world-tree in the "midst of which dwelt the Mother of All." The Norsemen made Jord to be the consort of their chief deity, Odin.

Thus the Romans worshiped Ceres, while the most perfect of the ancient civilizations, the Greek, reached the highest conception of a divine mother the world has ever known in the character of Demeter. She has been called the Mater Dolorosa, or the Sorrowing Mother of the Greek religion because of her grief over the loss of her child Proserpina, and she was the expression of the profoundest religious feelings and the most vital beliefs of that ancient race.

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From the very dawn of human intelligence, back beyond all our history, comes this conception of a divine mother, finding its expression in a formidable list of mother-gods. Many of their names are associated with revolting rites and ceremonies, but not more so than with the gods. Indeed, it required the virtues of some of their goddesses, as Demeter and Pallas-Athene, for instance, to redeem the character of the Greek Olympus.

In spite of the feeling that this has been thus far "a man's world," the figure of maternity has persisted in man's thought of the origin of things, and a woman has had her place in the god-heads that men have created. Sometimes, as among the Egyptians and Persians, hers was the dominating place. Eighteen hundred years before Christ, Assurbanipal prayed to Ishtar: "Queen of the Gods, into whose hands are delivered the commands of the great gods, Lady who rules all kingdoms, who determines all decrees, the goddess of the universe, Lady of heaven and earth, who hears petitions, heeds sighs, the merciful goddess who loves justice."

The momentum of this conception has been irresistible, and thus it was, as has been suggested in an earlier chapter, that Mary the mother of Jesus gradually grew into a sort of

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demi-goddess answering to conceptions with which early Roman converts to the Christian Church were familiar and which their religious customs continued to demand. The persistence of the idea is significant to any student of religious history and should perhaps have received more consideration than has been given it, and perhaps too there might have been a more sympathetic attitude toward it. W. E. Orchard, in a published sermon on "The Motherhood of God," says: "Much as we condemn the inevitable confusion that arises through the introduction of Mary as a means of approach to God, surely we can recognize that it is due simply to a blundering endeavor to find in God a mother-heart."

It seems that somewhere along the way of human history; at some time in the development of the revelation of God's love to humanity, occurred an evident interruption to a divine plan. We cannot place a finger on either event or time, but perhaps it was when man began to assume the entire leadership in religion, especially its institutional forms and expressions. In some way religion came to be almost entirely masculine. Its popes, priests, prophets, preachers, theologians, and leaders have been men. Concerning this, J. Brierly, in an essay on "Sex in Religion," has

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this to say: "Nothing has been made clearer than that the attempt to build religion out of elements purely masculine is a blunder for which the outraged nature of things will always take a full revenge." He then details some of the directions and results of this blunder. "He [man] has assumed the right to legislate for the church, to define its doctrines, to build up its whole system of thought, and a pretty mess he has made of it. His ecclesiastical policy has split the church into a thousand pieces, while his theology has made religion hateful to multitudes of ingenuous minds. It is safe to say that the mother side of humanity would never have constructed the hell of mediævalism, nor have made it possible to exhibit as orthodoxy the notion of Aquinas that heaven's pleasure would be augmented by the view of the tortures of the lost, or that of Calvin, of the preordained damnation of the nonelect. The male ecclesiastic, imagining religion to be an affair of dry intellect, a formula to be ground out of his logic mill, succeeded in making it anti-human. He achieved the surprising feat of so dressing up the primal facts concerning God and the soul as to make theology a nightmare, and of turning a region of thought, which ought to have been man's highest inspiration, into

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a jumble of inconsistencies, at once a barrier to faith and a stumblingblock to the moral sense.”¹

It is strange that we have not caught in this masculine failure and in woman's very nature the hint of God's thought: that some of the qualities which inhere in him are found peculiarly in woman, and that when it comes to religion at least, he has equipped her for full participation with man in its development. Brierly asserts that though man has tried hard he has not succeeded in excluding her from the religious sphere, “For behind most of the great teachers has stood a woman.” Among others he names Monica, the mother of Augustine; Macrina, the inspiration of Basil and Gregory of Nyssa; Jacqueline, who was back of Pascal; Paula, Hildegarde, Catherine of Siena; and he adds: “Each century of the Dark Ages is illuminated by some woman teacher.”

Perhaps there was significance in the two groups of people who stood at the foot of the cross of Jesus—the four Roman soldiers, and opposed to them the four Christian women, who were there no less than the others to guard the cross. Perhaps they were repre-

¹ From *Ourselves and the Universe*. Used by permission of Congregational Publishing Society, publishers.

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sentative of that new departure, by which an increasing participation and responsibility in the affairs of his kingdom were to be given to the second group; and a new revolution, albeit a silent one, in which the inherent qualities for leadership in religion were to mark the further evolution of woman and humanity.

Someone suggests that in her creation woman was a further remove from the earth than man in that she was taken from his side. But whatever the cause, we are ready to admit with Brierly: "It is the woman's nature that, more intimately than the man's, expresses the innermost soul of religion. It is dawning upon us that those spheres of reason and of logic where man is strongest, and where he loved of old to elaborate his theologic systems, are not, after all, the place where we shall find the thing we are seeking. It is in the region beyond reason, in the sphere of intuition, of feeling, of aspiration, of that Formless, which Goethe declared to be the highest thing in man, that religion finds at once its perennial spring and its impregnable refuge. And it is precisely because in these regions, woman's nature is at its richest that we are beginning to discover how primary and how essential is the contribution which she makes to it. It is because along that side of its

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nature humanity most quickly and most surely feels the quiver of the Infinite that woman must inevitably in the future be recognized as arch-priestess of religion.”¹

Edwin Markham has expressed the hunger for this Mother side of God in this quotation from his “Song to the Divine Mother.”

“Come, Mighty Mother from the bright abode,
Lift the low heavens, and hush the earth again;
Come when the moon throws down a shining road
Across the sea—come back to weary men.

“But if the moon throws out across the sea
Too dim a light, too wavering a way,
Come when the sunset paves a path for thee
Across the waters falling into gray.

“Dead nations saw thee dimly in release—
In Aphrodite rising from the foam:
Some glimmer of thy beauty was on Greece,
Some trembling of thy passion was on Rome.

.

“So here I stand at the world’s weary feet,
And cry the sorrow of the world’s dumb years;
I cry because I hear the world’s heart beat,
Weary of hope and broken through by tears.

“Come, Bride of God, to fill the vacant throne,
Touch the dim earth again with sacred feet;
Come, build the Holy City of white stone,
And let the whole world’s gladness be complete.”²

¹ From *Ourselfs and the Universe*. Used by permission of Congregational Publishing Society, publishers.

² Used by permission of the author.

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But Mr. Markham is careful to explain in a footnote* that his reference is to a Motherhood inherent in the very nature of God :

* "This song should be read in the light of the deep and memorable truth that the Divine Feminine as well as the Divine Masculine Principle is in God—that he is Father-Mother, Two-in-One. It follows from this truth that the dignity of womanhood is grounded in the Divine Nature itself. The fact that the Deity is Man-Woman was known to the ancient poets and sages, and was grafted into the nobler religions of mankind. The idea is implied in the doctrine of the Divine Father, taught by our Lord in the Gospels."

In our condemnation of Mary-worship we should try to realize what a deep-abiding, human, heart-hunger it expresses and how inevitably it grew out of the abuses of that ecclesiastical system which made the rack and torture, with all their horrible implications, possible. Orchard wisely advises Protestantism not to rob devout Catholic worshipers of the comfort they find in Mary unless the need which is met in her is provided in our teaching about God. But this, *we hasten to assure, is exactly what has been done.*

There was absolutely no reason for imposing a Mother-Deity upon the Christian religion. Responding to the demand of the human heart for a mother-side to God, were the Scriptures of the Christian Church, abound-

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ing with references to the tender and gentle mother-love of God.

We are told (Gen. 1. 2) that in the first period of creation—that Chaos from which all things were evolved—"the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." A more fortunate translation of the passage would read: "And the Spirit of God *brooded* over the face of the waters"; for the original expresses a sense of "that tremulous motion made by the hen while either hatching her eggs or fostering her young." According to Adam Clarke, it "signifies the communicating a vital or prolific principle to the waters." He adds that the teaching of the ancients that the world was generated from an egg was probably derived from this. But it puts no strain upon our vision to see here the imputation to the Spirit of God of what we know as the female function in the incubation of life. Indeed, it is a direct teaching that God functioned in the beginning as both Father and Mother. This we understand Genesis 1.27 to teach. "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." It here plainly declares that the image of God includes and comprehends what we know as male and female.

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The author of Deuteronomy (32. 11) describing the love of God for Israel says: "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange God with him." The word which we translate "eagle" is said to mean "the rachama," a bird remarkable for its affection for its young. She is known to actually bear them upon her back when they are weary and also to protect them from the arrows of the archer with her own body, which they must first pierce before they can harm her birdling. It is significant that the word "fluttereth" is precisely the same term used in Genesis 1. 2, meaning "brooding"; so that the Creator is again presented as exercising a function peculiar to motherhood. David more than hints at this truth in his figure of the love of God: "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up" (Psa. 27. 10). Sometimes the provident care of a father fails and the tender love of a mother wanes; then God who is *both* and *more than both* will come to the rescue. Isaiah brings us a number of beautiful messages from God teaching his mother-affection: "Can a woman forget her sucking child? . . . Yea, they may forget, yet

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will I not forget thee" (49. 15). "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you" (66. 13).

W. Robertson Nicoll calls attention to the failure of our version to fully present the picture which the original of Isaiah 31. 5 does of the mothering of God: "As little mother-birds hovering, so will Jehovah of hosts protect Jerusalem"; and adds, "This suggestion God himself approved. Centuries after when he assumed our flesh and spake our language, when he put his love into parables lowly and familiar to our affections, there were none of them more beautiful than that which he uttered of this same city, weeping as he spoke: 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, and yet ye would not.' " These, with many other confirming passages in the Old Testament, reveal an unfolding of the idea of God as pronounced as the evolution from the thought of him as a fetish to that of Jehovah.

But it is not until we come to the New Testament that we get the fuller revelation, when he flowers into the passion and tenderness of an infinite love. The hunger for a God who comforts as a mother consoles her child is absolutely satis-

fied in Christ's revelation of the Heavenly Father. The gospel scheme does not need Mary to replace, as Renan says she does in the Roman Catholic Church, the Holy Spirit as the third person, nor does it require the addition of a woman as a fourth Person in the Godhead. It is the poverty of our language to which Christ was himself compelled to yield, that has led to the crude presentation of God as being masculine. Isaiah found it necessary in expressing his idea of God to refer to his womanly qualities, but to one who understands him in the Gospels and especially as revealed by Christ, God is both genders—masculine and feminine—Father and Mother.

The very mission of Jesus was to show us in the heart of God the strength, stability, and the provision for our needs which we associate with the name of father; and also the pity, patience, the sacrifice, and devotion which we enshrine in the name of mother. And all the might and power, all the gentleness and sweetness of this Personality Jesus gathers up and condenses into the new all-encompassing picture of God: "*for God is love.*" Not father-love nor mother-love alone, as we know them, but all-inclusive, eternal love and tenderness in their infinite development and consummation.

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Paul uses a significant term when in his prayer for his Ephesian converts he asks (Eph. 3. 19) that they may "know the love of Christ" so that they "might be filled with all the *fullness* of God." Must we have a light-god like Helios in our Godhead? No; for all fullness dwells in him; "God *is* light." Must we then have a mother-god like Demeter? No; for "God *is* love"—all love, complete love; all its beauties and fragrances are in him. And this love of God "shed abroad" in the human heart, breaks up into mother love, father love, filial love, conjugal love, brotherly love. All the colors and shades of human love—sympathy, kindness, tenderness, mercy, compassion, benevolence and charity—are only refractions of the "fullness" which in him is.

But it was particularly in the intimacies of Jesus with the Divine Father—more than in the terms he uses and his teachings—that we see clearest the heart of God. There was a dutiful reverence; but it was more than dutiful—it was beautiful, it was loving. His approaches to God were absolutely devoid of fear. There was in his very nature the ability to understand the side of God's nature which the world has never been able to appreciate; he was himself uniquely able to enjoy it and to interpret it to the world. What has been called

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the womanly element in the nature of Jesus has attracted the attention of some of his critics. He understood women, and his attitude to women so changed their position that all of Paul's prejudice against the sex has not been able to alter it. He seemed to have matured a democracy of the spirit which was above classes and sex.

It was the discernment of this element in him which, we are persuaded, intensified the assault of German rationalism and the "Blonde Beast," in what we hope was the final and expiring attack of paganism upon the Christian civilization. There could be absolutely no accord between Jesus and the program of militarism. The "Creed of the Hun" had in it no place for the bruised reed, no place for the meek, no toleration of the merciful, nothing but abhorrence for the poor in spirit, and contempt for the surrender of Jesus to his foes, for they said, "Only the weak are crucified." It was the voice of primitive carnality, the call of the wild, the bellow of Thor and Woden in protest against the gentle, chivalrous elements of a growing civilization, in which were increasingly coming to the fore the womanly characteristics to soften the asperities and animalisms of the carnal man. These, combined with a full-orbed, courageous

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manliness, found their expression in Jesus and unquestionably led to this tremendous assault upon him and his religion.

Jesus was a man, forceful and courageous beyond anyone our race has ever seen. The quality of his manhood and courage was utterly beyond the apprehension of those who estimate that brawling and fighting are the highest expressions of bravery. The character of his manhood would not be understood by a soldier who, speaking of one of their chaplains who could smoke and chew tobacco and drink unlimited quantities of French wine, said, "Ah! he was a he-man." Jesus was a man, but he was a gentleman. Lord Chesterfield said, "He was the finest gentleman the world has ever seen." This was one of the elements of his uniqueness that made it possible for him to discern the same quality in the nature of God and to become its finest revelation to humanity. Jesus reveals to us the love of God, and the message he brings is of love so intimate, so tender, so undying that the modern mind can think of no fountain from which it could spring except a mother heart. He uses, it is true, the term "Father" because it was the highest word then in use by which he could introduce into the human mind the conception of the provident, tender love of God; but

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he so exalts the term above the limitations men have put upon it that it throws into salience the statement of Paul that in Jesus Christ "there is neither male nor female."

Whittier made the love and pity of his mother a scale by which he estimated the infinite scope of God's love for his earthly children. Louise Chandler Moulton tells that, "When he was a little boy of seven he was taken by his mother to see a girl who had lost her character, and who had become dangerously ill. The pious people of the village let her severely alone, but the poet's mother, who was a Quaker woman with a very kind heart, did not allow herself to be influenced by common prejudice. Whittier never forgot how his mother addressed the sufferer as 'my dear child,' gave her food, and attended to her comfort. 'After awhile,' he told me, 'I went out of doors, and looking up to the blue sky, I thought that the God who lived up there must be as good as my mother. If she was so helpful to wicked people, he could not be less kind. Since that time,' he added, 'I have never doubted the ultimate goodness of God and his loving purpose for the world.'"

His mother's love was a prism in which he saw reflected the infinite, all-encompassing love of the heavenly Father mothering a whole

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human race. And his appropriation of his share of that love led him to write the beautiful hymn of trust, one stanza of which runs:

“I know not where his islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond his love and care.
And thou, O Lord, by whom are seen,
Thy creatures as they be,
Forgive me if too close I lean
My human heart on thee.”

This love of God as a Divine Mother is the highest and mightiest force for the moral government of the world. There are those who cannot think of tempering the judgments of God or weakening the fear of him by injecting any sentiment like love or kindness into his rule; who say that his wrath and his justice are too little preached now. Perhaps they are right. At any rate, there is consolation in remembering that God is both Father and Mother, the God of Sinai and Calvary. But it should ever be borne in mind that there may be a fear of God with no moral element in it. Some of the conceptions of the wrath of God and some of the pictures of his punishments have not had a deterrent effect upon evil nor, really, a moral influence upon the world. The criminal may be restrained through a fear that does not make him morally

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better. A father to uphold the sense of his authority may punish his child in such a way as to make the results absolutely demoralizing. There have been a great many backslidings in the "woodshed" and many disintegrations of character through an abject and craven fear.

Let us by all means deepen the fear of God. But it must have something in it like the fear we have for a good mother if it really makes us better. A man who had utterly failed to restrain his son from evil ways, in very despair turned him over to the mother. Afterward he said, "I want to say that the fear that a boy may have for his mother lest he pain her is a moral force second only to the grace of God." It is said that when you have been in the "far country" and come back home it is easier to meet your father than your mother. A fugitive poem entitled, "When Mother Looks at Me," expresses something of the subtle influence of a mother:

"I 'member such a lot of things
That happened long ago,
When me an' Jim was six years old,
And now we're ten or so.
But those that I remember best—
The ones I most can see—
Are the things that used to happen
When mother looked at me.

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"It's funny how it makes you feel—
I ain't afraid of her—
She's about the nicest person
You'd find 'most anywhere;
But the queerest sort of feeling,
As queer as queer can be,
Makes everything seem different
When mother looks at me."

Yes, we need to deepen the fear of God, but the fear must have in it something of that terror that John in the Apocalyptic vision saw falling upon those who cried out to the rocks and mountains (Rev. 6. 16): "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." The fear of infinite justice and infinite love, as expressed in "the Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world," is a compelling sentiment that goes to the very heart of our moral nature.

The Greeks expressed this punitive power of love, in one of the myths of Demeter, their divine mother. They conceived of her as a character of infinite greatness and dignity, but her heart was a very fountain of tenderness and compassion. She was the most lovable of all their deities. It is related that once an impious man, Erysichthon, presuming upon the goodness of the goddess, went with a force of men into one of her sacred groves to cut

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down timber. The gentle goddess was greatly troubled by the deed, and taking the form of one of her old priestesses she falteringly approached the violator and in pleading words besought him to cease his depredations "lest Demeter be angry with him." He impatiently bade her to stand one side lest he strike her down with his ax and declared his intention of cutting enough timber to build him a banqueting house. Then the goddess assumed her real form. "Her head seemed to touch the heavens while the whole place was filled with her majesty." But in gentle terms she told him to go on and build his house and promised that he should have all the feasting he wanted. She then smote him with an insatiable hunger, to satisfy which he consumed all his own and his father's possessions. Still unsatisfied he sold his only daughter to purchase food and at the last, impoverished, he tore into pieces and devoured his own body.

The higher we pitch the note of God's love for his earthly children the wider range and greater power we give to his ministers of justice in the moral government of the world. Nothing is more tragical in all the perversions into which theological controversy has forced us than such an emphasis upon the father side of God that we have lost sight of

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the mother quality in his nature. For it is in these qualities that the human heart finds its real refuge and consolation.

"Hello, little mother! Don't disturb yourself. I am on my way to a directors' meeting and just dropped in for a moment of counsel." Here was a great, strong son, a very prop in the commercial life of his city, still coming to the source of refreshment and counsel—a little daily visit with his mother. So there is in the heart of God, the "secret place of the Most High," a refuge where buffeted and storm-driven men may find sanctuary. It is the Mother-heart of God.

Saxe Holm (Helen Hunt Jackson) has a beautiful bit of verse in which she aligns God's love watching his swinging earth with a mother's love bending over the cradle of her little one:

"Like a cradle rocking, rocking,
Silent, peaceful, to and fro;
Like mother's sweet looks dropping
On the little face below,
Hangs the green earth, swinging, turning,
Jarless, noiseless, safe and slow;
Falls the light of God's face bending
Down and watching us below.
And as feeble babes that suffer,
Toss and cry and will not rest,
Then it is that God's great patience
Holds us closest, loves us best."



Ferruzzi

MADONNA

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Down through the years a legend drifts, and in its
heart a truth
As sacred now as when the world was in its golden
youth.
An angel came from Paradise,—so runs the olden
tale,—
And seeking what was best on earth, he traveled hill
and dale.
“For I must find,” the angel said, “and bear to Heaven’s
throne
The sweetest and the purest thing that ever earth has
known.”

And so he took a baby’s smile, by means an angel knows,
A cluster of fairest flowers, the lily and the rose,
The love that fills a mother’s heart and shines from
out her eyes;
And then with these returned again beyond the azure
skies.

And as he neared the gates of pearl the waiting angel
host
Beheld the choice that he had made of what earth
values most.
In unison they greeted him, and thus the word arose:
“Oh, sweet and pure the baby’s smile, the lily and the
rose,
But these are passing things of earth; a thing that
never dies
Is love that fills a mother’s heart and shines from out
her eyes.
And that, of all the earth can boast, is fit for Paradise.”

CHAPTER IX

MOTHER MINE

MARY the Mother exemplifies that undying devotion which is the outstanding quality of true motherhood and which we all impute to our own mothers. With the faithfulness of a martyr she travels her Via Dolorosa to the bitter end. Through the deepening gloom and increasing mystery of Golgotha she pursues her lonely way—for what human association could afford her comradeship?—to the very foot of the cross on which her Son hangs in death agony.

It is said that the Empress Saint Helena caused a beautiful church to be built on the brow of that hill from which the enemies of Jesus would once have cast him down (Luke 4. 14-30), and commemorating the sorrow of the anxious mother she named it, "The Church of Our Lady in Terror." But no monument has ever been attempted to memorialize the grief and terror of Mary as she sees Jesus in the final clutch of his relentless enemies as they hurry him to Calvary. We all

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feel that any attempt to express what she must have experienced would be utterly futile. In awesome fear of him they had allowed him to pass from that other danger through their hands to safety; but this one is not to be evaded, and his mother with unutterable anxiety in her heart watches the terrible consummation that bears her Son "as a lamb to the slaughter." But she presses bravely on to his and her Golgotha until she looks up into his dying face and drinks the cup of agony which may not pass from her, to its bitter dregs, her only consolation, that, motherlike, she may at least in spirit suffer with him. When Hagar was driven with her child into the wilderness, where he was perishing with thirst (Gen. 21. 16), she laid him under a shrub, and weeping, "sat her down over against him a good way off, . . . for she said, 'Let me not see the death of the child.' " But Mary's love was deeper, and was deathless in its devotion.

It is not needed that the imagination playing upon the scene of the crucifixion should be morbid to bring to the most unfeeling and insensate reader of the record something of all that her mother-heart endured as she saw Him whom she knew to be spotless and innocent, noble and sensitive, suffering indignity

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and death at the rude hands of the Roman soldiers. Tradition informs us that Mary redeemed from the soldier who had won it the seamless garment she had woven for Jesus and which he wore to the last. It is probably a true interpretation of the mother-devotion which actuated her and in which she becomes the supreme representative of motherhood everywhere. In a small Illinois village one day a young mother dying, pledged her husband to present her three-year-old child and her young baby for baptism at the next Children's Day Service. At that occasion the aged minister, who had baptized, received into the church, and married them, prefaced the baptism of their children by a statement of the facts, and then requested that some mother whose heart prompted her to do so, should come forward and lay a mother's hand in benediction with his upon the motherless babes, and add a silent prayer to his, that the Infinite Father and Mother of us all would care for and preside over their lives. He was astonished at the response, for every mother in that house—"a long procession of women, young mothers and gray-haired, tottering grandmothers—passed around the little church and each paused to bestow a mother's blessing on the children."

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It need not have astonished the minister, for every good mother would instinctively react to the devotion of that one of her kind, who to the very last was true to her dear ones, even as Mary went all the weary, heart-breaking way with her Son. And then, in continued devotion, she obeyed his direction from the cross and went home with John where with the same silent, unobtrusive interest with which she had cared for Jesus during his life, she assisted in the maturing of his plans after his death. It is not improbable that the superb qualities of her life which during his earthly days found their main expression through his personality and work should continue to infuse the early church with his spirit and come to be a directing and molding influence among the apostles.

Unquestionably, her residence in the home of John equipped him—as it must have also aided Luke—for finally writing his Gospel, through which he sent down through the centuries a matchless interpretation of the spirit and genius of her Son. It can only be explained by the presence of the one who of all the world knew him best, speaking for him through the mind and soul and pen of his very best friend. Any reader of the record of the church in those early days will sense the

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presence of a marvelous influence that permeated that little timid body of believers with an atmosphere of almost unearthly holiness, a spirit of unnatural wisdom and heroic fortitude, and which fused them into a oneness approximating the ideal of Jesus as revealed in his final prayer for them (John 17).

There is no support for the tradition that Mary took the place of Jesus after his death and became "The Queen of the Apostles." It is probably, however, an exaggeration which superstition has given to the real place which was naturally accorded her after the resurrection, due, not to any assumption on her part, but to the influence of her gentle, patient devotion to Jesus and the church for which he died. Those fine qualities and abilities which had served him all his earthly days, continued to minister to him to the very last of her days, and were undoubtedly a source of inspiration and leadership in the early church. Dr. Arthur T. Pierson has called the *Acts of the Apostles* "The Acts of the Holy Spirit." What is more reasonable than that the Holy Spirit whom Jesus said he would send, looking about for human agents through whom he could exercise his power and leadership, would find all ready at his hand the one he had honored and overshadowed so many years

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ago; who had been, through all her motherhood, so amenable to his will, and who with the same humble persistence of her wonderful personality influenced the growth and development of the new Body of Christ as she had that old body that had so bravely carried him all the way to Calvary?

It is too a matter of deep joy to the Christian world that Jesus gave indication in his very last moments of that sympathy which we believe ever existed between them; a sympathy based upon something higher and more eternal than even the loving human relationship of mother and son; the sympathy of two wills subordinated to one common, supreme purpose, fused by it into a perfect oneness and that carried on past cross and death and the grave. This was reflected in his last word to her. "When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, 'Woman, behold thy Son'" (John 19. 26). We would in our superficial thought, wish that he had used a tenderer term than that of "woman." But we reflect that it was not with him an eternal farewell. Death was only an incident in their career and its separation not nearly so prolonged as many in their former relationships. Here the power of his enemies

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to keep them apart ceases. He would soon be with his friends again. Consequently, the grief and distress that the unbeliever experiences in the separations of death and which mar so often the "departure" of a loved one that might be full of hope and the cheer of an anticipated reunion, he knew nothing about. In a few short hours he was to be "in

the midst" of them again. So, as he looks down from the cross he sees, in startling contrast to the four Roman soldiers, a group of four women who had helped him in the great mission.



CRUCIFIXION

Hofmann

But his gaze centers upon the one who has helped most, who had given most,

who had comprehended most; who had been for the Son of man a perfect team-mate, not only as a mother based upon the human relationship, but as woman. And he

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uses a term that expresses his profound respect for the unique attributes of her sex, for the superb qualities of her own mind, and the deep, tender affections of her heart. She had not only been his mother but his Comrade in the greatest venture ever committed to the hands of a man and woman. How profound must have been his thought, how sweeping his vision, and how tender his feeling as from the apex of his earthly experience he looks back to its beginnings with this woman in Bethlehem's manger, takes in all the weary way since to this tragic scene on Golgotha's summit, and cries, "It is finished!"

But he does not forget Mary the Mother. John with his exquisite taste refuses to emphasize the harrowing scenes of the crucifixion, but with eloquent simplicity he records his Master's last word to his mother and then adds his last message to his friend: "Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home" (John 19. 27).

No panegyric of motherhood could equal the eloquence of that act. Probably no other person of history, under anything like the awful exactions of his dying hour, has singled out in his last moments, his mother as the object of his most intense solicitude. It would

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not be possible to imagine the intolerable pain and agony of the hours through which he was passing; not only the physical but such mental and spiritual distress as wrung from his breaking heart the cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" But 'midst his bodily



Dobson

JOHN AND THE MOTHER OF JESUS

agony, his mental perturbation, he thinks of the one dearest to his heart, and makes the very best possible provision for the comfort of her person, the care of her old age; and by giving her to John, his dearest friend, he assures her continued touch and association with his kingdom and church. What a beautiful, thoughtful act! How splendidly its simplicity and grace contrast with the closing hours of the great Greek victim Prometheus, which Æschylus stages with such dramatic power. *While saving a*

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world and expiating its sin Jesus had time to care for his mother.

Someone has said, "The Protestant Madonna is not the Virgin Mother, but one's own mother." It is inevitable that meditation upon Mary should lead each of us to think lovingly of the sacrifice and devotion of the woman who mothered us. Mothers vary in their virtues and qualities, but it is quite remarkable that every man pronounces this eulogy upon his own, "The best mother in the world." Maeterlinck wrote: "There are no poor mothers, no ugly ones, no old ones. Their love is always the most beautiful of the Joys." In a letter to his mother, Thomas Carlyle wrote: "If I had all the mothers I ever saw to choose from, I would have chosen you." A well-nigh universal sentiment was expressed by Kate Douglas Wiggin when she said: "Most of all the beautiful things in life come in twos and threes, by dozens and hundreds. Plenty of roses, stars, sunsets, rainbows, brothers and sisters, aunts and cousins, but only one mother in all the wide world."

One approaches with a diffidence and hesitation born of a sense of incompetence the attempt to eulogize his own mother. Perhaps it was a manifestation of the genius of Shake-

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speare to see that he could not draw the portrait of the ideal mother. At any rate, his failure to make the attempt is significant. He has touched every other phase of woman's life with marvelous sympathy. The ideal daughter is Cordelia; he has presented two portraits of the ideal wife, Imogen and Desdemona. Isabella is an ideal sister. A woman's capacity for friendship is shown in Rosalind and Celia. The world-renowned lovers are Juliet and Miranda, while the faithful servant is enshrined in Paulina. There is a sketch of the ideal nurse Lychorida, who takes a mother's place and ministers as lovingly and faithfully perhaps as another might, but he holds his hand when it comes to a portrayal of the ideal mother. The other kind he has drawn; Juliet's stony-hearted mother and the mother of Hamlet; but the very sacredness of the subject has perhaps deterred him from attempting the picture of his own mother or a portrait of motherhood worthy of a place in his notable gallery of women.

May it not have been that with something of the same noble reticence Jesus—who didn't attempt as Phidias did a likeness of God—refused to draw a portrait of Mary. At any rate, a strange sense of inadequacy and humility touches the rest of us at the mere thought

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of presuming to describe our own. The profound appreciation of his mother once led a man to plan an elaborate monument that should worthily memorialize her virtues. The result, however, of all his thought eventualized only in a simple stone on which was carved a beautiful hand pointing heavenward, and the single eloquent, all-expressive word, "Mother." How could he have said it better? In a tender bit of verse Richard Watson Gilder has expressed this sentiment:

"Many the names, the souls, the faces dear
That I have longed to frame in verse sincere;
But one high name, sweet soul, and face of love
Seemed ever my poor art, oh far above.
Like Mary's, stricken with sorrow was that face;
Like hers it wore a most majestic grace.
That soul was tender as the sunset sky,
And full of lofty dream her days went by;
That name—than God's alone there is no other
Holy as thine to me, O sacred Mother!"¹

Many people have no remembrance of their mother. Perhaps she gave her life that they might live. She had only the pain and travail of their birth and never knew some of the compensating joys of watching the life she brought into the world, while it "increased in wisdom, and stature and in favor with God

¹ From "Many the Names." Used by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company.

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and man." To such her name is perhaps peculiarly sacred, and her spirit nothing more than a haunting formless presence, that, true to the passion of motherhood, hovers ever over their lives. Eos was the Greek goddess of the Dawn. She had a beautiful son, Memnon, who was slain by Achilles. She caused a great bronze statue to be erected to his memory, and then every morning as she parted the curtains of the day, she smiled upon him and he responded to his divine mother with notes of sweetest music. The myth becomes a veritable fact. Every day boys and girls and men and women go out to perform wonderful deeds worthy of memorials in bronze, because they feel that a mother, invisible to all others, smiles upon them. It is related of ex-Governor Russell, of Massachusetts, that when a youth he was once thrown into the water from a capsizing sailboat and had to swim more than a mile before he was rescued from drowning. His mother asked him how he had managed to hold out so long. He replied, "I thought of you, mother, and kept on swimming." Has not many a brave swimmer in the sea of life been buoyed up by the thought of his mother?

Many people must now see their mother through the tender mist of years and tears;

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a memory kept ever alive by gentle reminders of the one, "loved long since and lost awhile." In one home there is "mother's chair," which through the years they have carried with them, as Æneas carried his household gods all the way from Troy to Rome, because it was peculiarly her chair in which she rested sometimes and in which she had rocked her babies to sleep to the lullabies and wordless songs that mothers use. Sometimes it is a speaking likeness of her remembered face that makes her presence real. William Cowper, looking upon his mother's picture, said in verse now old-fashioned :

"The meek intelligence of those dear eyes,
(Blessed be the art that can immortalize;
The art that baffles Time's tyrannic claim
To quench it,) here shines on me the same.
And while that face renews my filial grief,
Fancy shall weave a charm for my relief,
Shall steep me in Elysian reverie,
A momentary dream that thou art she."

Frequently her memory is evoked through the Bible she used. Bishop Gilbert Haven had such a book. He wrote of it: "On one of the shelves in my library, surrounded by volumes of all kinds, on various subjects, and in various languages, stands an old book, in its plain covering in brown paper, unprepossessing to the

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eye, and apparently out of place among the more pretentious volumes that stand by its side. Its covers are worn; its leaves marred by long use; its pages once white now yellow with age; yet old and worn as it is, to me it is the most valuable and beautiful book on my shelves. It is, or rather, it was, my mother's Bible—companion of her best and holiest hours, source of her unspeakable joy and consolation. Years have passed but it still stands there on its shelf, eloquent as ever, witness of a beautiful life that is finished, and a silent monitor to the living." These words recall an old song that used to be sung:

"There's a dear and precious book,
Though it's worn and faded now,
Which recalls the happy days of long ago;
When I sat at mother's knee,
With her hand upon my brow,
And I heard her voice in gentle tones and low."

Sometimes it's a Bible she placed in our hands at some event in our youthful days, perhaps when we left for school or left home to go out into the great workaday world. To countless thousands of men that picture, "Breaking Home Ties," makes eloquent appeal because it recalls the time when they pushed their bark of life away from the home pier to which they had been so safely moored

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and turned their prow out to the wide expanses of life's sea. Eugene Field has interpreted this picture in a poem, with words that, though they may be homely and old-fashioned, recall a scene some men can never forget:

"Well Tom, shake hands and say good-by
Afore you go away,
We hate to see you leavin', Tom;
We'd lots ruther hev ye stay.

.
And here's the little Bible
Mother sed to give to you.
She couldn't spend much money,
But I reckon it'll do,
As if we wasn't pore
And had more change to spare.
So take it Tom with mother's love,
And try to keep it well,—
It'll come in mighty handy
When you are fur away—
We hate to see you leavin', Tom,
We'd lots ruther hev ye stay."¹

Many a soldier boy in the great World War carried over French and German battlefields the memory of an American mother as with cheerful smile but brimming eyes she slipped a little khaki-bound Bible into his kit.

One day a man went out from a Mother's Day service where there had flashed upon his

¹ Used by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons, publishers.

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mind and startled conscience the vivid realization of the years of selfish neglect and indifference with which he had repaid a mother of rare devotion. The tears he shed during the service did not suffice to blot out the picture of her sitting, in material comfort it was true, but in deep loneliness of spirit in her distant home. So he hurried to the station, where he caught a train, and that evening as he crossed her threshold he took the dear, worn face between his strong hands and tried to pay all the year's arrears of thoughtlessness with remorseful kisses. He never ceased to be grateful for that service and that he had awakened in time to cheer her declining days with a chivalrous devotion which sought earnestly to atone for the years of heedless neglect.

We fear that the tendency of our day is away from the tender, chivalrous treatment of our mothers. Perhaps women in their emphasis upon a new-found independence, and impatience with any suggestion, however subtle, that they are "the weaker sex"; perhaps our young people in their modern Youth Movement, may help to this situation unless we are careful. But let us steadfastly hold to the ideal that chivalry, especially as relates to the treatment of women, is one of the finest graces of a strong, manly character, and that

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either a husband or son who is without it is deficient. At any rate, it has so characterized the attitude, to their mothers at least, of the greatest men of our race that it stands out on the pages of human history.

Julius Cæsar "was always passionately devoted to his mother, who shared his home up to the time of her death when he was forty-six years old." Cromwell's mother survived her husband thirty-seven years but lived with her son until she was ninety and was by him royally interred in Westminster Abbey. Most of the Presidents of our country have been singularly devoted to their mothers. George Washington, when a young man, was preparing to go to sea. When the cart came to take



L. E. Fournier

WASHINGTON'S VISIT TO HIS MOTHER

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his trunk to his boat his mother broke down and cried, saying, "George, your father is dead and I cannot bear to have you go away." It was enough. He gave up his plans and remained with her at home. Through all his busy life he was never too occupied to pay her a timely visit. John Quincy Adams always prayed at the close of the day the little prayer his mother had taught him, "Now I lay me down to sleep." General Grant was rarely too busy to remember his mother with a letter every week. President McKinley left the affairs of state to watch at the bedside of his mother when she was dying. John Randolph said, "When I tried to make myself an infidel I seemed to feel the hand of my mother on my head as she taught me to pray 'Our Father, who art in heaven.' " James A. Garfield turned from taking the oath of office as President of the United States to kiss his aged mother, whom he had brought to the platform with him. The act elicited universal admiration. One of the qualities that endeared President Loubet to the French people was expressed in a delightful act during the ceremonies of his inauguration. As the presidential landau passed the place from which Mme. Loubet was viewing the procession, the old lady stood up the better to see her son.

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He saw her instantly, and, despite the mild protests of those in charge, he stopped the procession, leaped from his carriage, ran up to the balcony, and taking his mother in his arms tenderly kissed her. It was perfectly characteristic of General Pershing to issue the following order to the American Expeditionary Forces in France, in 1918: "To all commanding officers: I wish every officer and soldier in the American expeditionary forces would write a letter home on Mother's Day (May 12). This is a little thing for each one to do, but these letters will carry back our courage and our affection to the patriotic women whose love and prayers inspire us and cheer us on to victory."

As human society evolves and a Christian civilization matures, the sentiment of cherishing and remembering motherhood becomes more and more prominent. It is to the everlasting credit of America that she should be the first country of the world to make national recognition of it and initiate a custom of annually observing a Mother's Day. The Senate and the House of Representatives, on May 10, 1913, passed a resolution commending Mother's Day for observance by the House and Senate, the President of the United States and his Cabinet, and the heads of other

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government departments. The following year, 1914, a joint resolution was introduced in which the President was requested to designate through an annual proclamation the second Sunday of each May as Mother's Day and request the display of the American flag on all government buildings, homes, and other suitable places.

In obedience to this the first national proclamation was issued by President Wilson asking that Sunday, May 10, 1914, be thus observed.

The tendency to unduly increase the list of our holidays is apparent, but this the latest addition is worthy of a welcome and place among the religious and national days that commemorate events of world-wide importance. It is not an excuse for a holiday; it is a holy day. Mother's Day was founded, "To honor and uplift motherhood and to give happiness to the best mother who ever lived—*Your Mother.*" John Wanamaker, pleading for its observance, said: "Take one day of the year for the memory of the one who in most of our hearts comes next to the blessed Christ himself."

But Mother's Day ought to eventuate in something more than mere sentiment. A few years ago a play entitled "Mother" was pre-

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sented in our theaters. Perhaps more than now people measured a book or a play or a sermon by the number of handkerchiefs required to wipe away the tears it caused. At any rate, a critic commended this play because it was "a six-handkerchief play"—a high-water mark evidently in the way of popularity. It was related that at one of the performances of this play a young man so blubbered and cried that the ushers requested him to leave, and that he went home and beat his poor old mother because she could not give him money for liquor. Whether the reporter drew upon his imagination for a part of this story or not, it is in some degree a true illustration of a tendency Americans have of drawing upon a fund of tears with which to pay some practical obligations. The emotion evoked by the name of mother ought to crystallize into some convictions and habits which the world sadly needs and for which no amount of weeping can compensate. And there is really a finer way of expressing our appreciation than yielding to the suggestion of business that we "Say it with flowers," or "jewels," or "candy," beautiful and appropriate as these may often be. We need to "say it" with obedience, kindness, love, and appreciation.

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The institution of Mother's Day, while a valuable and beautiful custom, may easily, unless we are careful, degenerate into a merely formal acknowledgment in which we attempt upon *one* day to pay an obligation that belongs to *every* day. If our own mother has become "lost awhile" and is beyond the reach of our gifts, the memory of her may well arouse a renewed comprehension of what the world owes womanhood and motherhood and result in a chivalrous devotion to mothers everywhere.

If she be still living the observance of Mother's Day ought most certainly produce a greater devotion to her person. The confession of a woman noted for years as a social leader might well be made by a great many people. She said: "Not until my mature years did I realize how unworthy I had been of the flood of mother-love that was poured out upon my girlhood days. One of my bitterest memories is the mental picture of the utter selfishness with which I allowed my mother to lavish her love and care upon me and the vanity and complacency with which I absorbed it all. I think some people tried to tell me what a good mother I had and I am sure that I realized it in my thoughtless way. But oh! I wish that someone had told

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me what a good daughter my mother deserved, for perhaps I might have solaced her with the appreciation it is now too late to show." This same deeply felt sentiment was expressed by Charles Lamb: "What would I not give to call my dear mother back to earth for a single day to ask her pardon on my knees for all those acts by which I grieved her gentle spirit."

It is a weakness in mother-love that allows a child to treat her with indifference and neglect. Better that type of mother who said to her son: "The only reason I cannot surrender to you in this thing you ask is that if you live, you will some day understand and will suffer keenly the memory of my sacrifice and humiliation. I love you too dearly to subject you to that pain in the coming years." It is strange that a mother-love, that will shield with her life if necessary a boy or girl from suffering, will not protect them from this most poignant pang of remorse. Three young men stood sorrowing around the bedside of their dying mother. They thought she had lapsed into a final unconsciousness and one of them said, brokenly: "Never three boys were blessed with a better mother." Almost instantly the closed eyes were opened and with a supreme rally of her ebbing strength she gave them a

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look of unutterable love and spoke: "Never mother was blessed with better sons." We submit that no finer contribution to their earthly happiness could have been made than to leave them with such a consolation.

It would be a profitable exercise of their mental and moral processes if children were taught to think out an appreciation of the countless things a mother does for her home and loved ones. That was a rather sharp, but all-too-true criticism which someone made: "Many a daughter sweeps down the stairway with the air of a queen and never thinks of how her mother sweeps down the same stairway with a broom." S. E. Kiser puts this into a bit of homely verse which runs:

"Used to let his poor old mother go and carry in the
wood,
She was just a packhorse for him, but he never understood;
Never thought of bringin' water from the spring down
by the lane
Or of helpin' her to gether in the clos' before the rain;
Let her keep a-waitin' on him, though her back was
achin' so—
'Twasn't 'cause he didn't love her—he just didn't
think, you know.

"After while the weary mother put her burdens all
away,
And we went and heard the preacher praise the poor
old soul one day,

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And I stood and looked down at her when they pushed
the lid aside—
Poor old hands! I didn't wonder that her boy sat
there and cried
Just as if he couldn't bear it—just as if his heart'd
break—
He had kind of got to seein' what she suffered for his
sake."¹

A Sunday-school teacher was once telling her class about Jesus and she said: "This one of whom I speak is the great, loving Burden-Bearer of the world. Do you know who it is?" A little fellow, snapping his fingers excitedly, shouted with shining face, "Please, teacher, I know: that's my mother." It isn't given many mothers to have such sincere appreciation and it is deserved by thousands upon thousands who never receive it in this life.

"How many cares does the mother heart know,
Nobody knows but mother;
How many joys from her mother love flow,
Nobody knows but mother;
How many prayers by each little white bed
How many tears for her babes has she shed,
How many kisses for each curly head,
Nobody knows but mother."

—*Anonymous.*

Because a mother has been the burden-bearer
in the home; because, to preserve it and its

¹ Used by permission of author.

inmates, she has gone out and borne the burdens in social and civic life; and because her hands have been so busy with her many tasks, she may the more easily become the victim of loneliness, when, as age advances, she is compelled to give up her burdens. Young people are apt to be so absorbed with their own life that they swing on, all unconscious of the tragic figure of the mother who cannot yet adapt herself to days of idleness. It is pathetic that while the most of us live to make ourselves necessary and indispensable to others, a mother must train her loved ones to do without her. She has failed unless she has equipped them to go on without her assistance. But shall we allow her to go on without our association? Must her sacrifices be crowned with this crown of thorns—*the indifference and neglect of her children?* Spending a few days in a beautiful home, a visitor noticed that every evening at nine o'clock her host would excuse himself, put on his overcoat and rubbers and, leaving the house, be gone for a half hour. His wife explained: "No matter what the weather may be, no matter who are our guests, my husband never fails, when he is in the city and able to do so, to run over to his mother's, three blocks away, to bid her good night. And when absent from the city

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he rarely fails to write her a daily letter. This he has done for thirty years." Some measure of this fine chivalrous devotion should characterize all children in their filial relationships.

Bishop C. C. McCabe, whom Bishop Frank Bristol has named "The Grand Field-Marshal of Methodism," and whom many knew by a dearer title, "The Singing Chaplain," was singularly gifted and influenced by his mother. His testimonial of her reads: "Her memory is fragrant to her children as with the very breath of heaven, and among the glorious events of the future there is one anticipation that thrills my soul, and that is the meeting with my mother in the better land." In his impassioned way he used to say: "Man, if you have an old mother, be good to her. Don't wait to put all your love into a ton of marble marked 'Mother.' Tell her that you love her. Kiss her faded old lips. Wrap your arms around the shrunken old figure. Take the knotted old toil-marred hands in yours. They may not be beautiful now, but God can't make a beautiful heaven without them." There are thousands of people who can remember the waves of emotion that swept his audiences as he sang in the wonderful voice, inherited from his mother and pulsating with

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the tender sentiments evoked by her memory,
these words:

“Such beautiful, beautiful hands!
They're neither white nor small,
And you, I know, would scarcely think
That they were fair at all.
I've looked on hands whose form and hue
A sculptor's dream might be,
Yet are these aged, wrinkled hands,
Most beautiful to me.

“Such beautiful, beautiful hands!
Though heart were weary and sad,
These patient hands kept toiling on
That the children might be glad.
I almost weep as looking back
To childhood's distant day,
I think how these hands rested not
When mine were at their play.

“But, oh! beyond this shadow land
Where all is bright and fair,
I know full well those dear old hands
Will palms of victory bear;
Where crystal streams, through endless years,
Flow over golden sands,
And where the old are young again,
I'll clasp my mother's hands!”

